Chronicles

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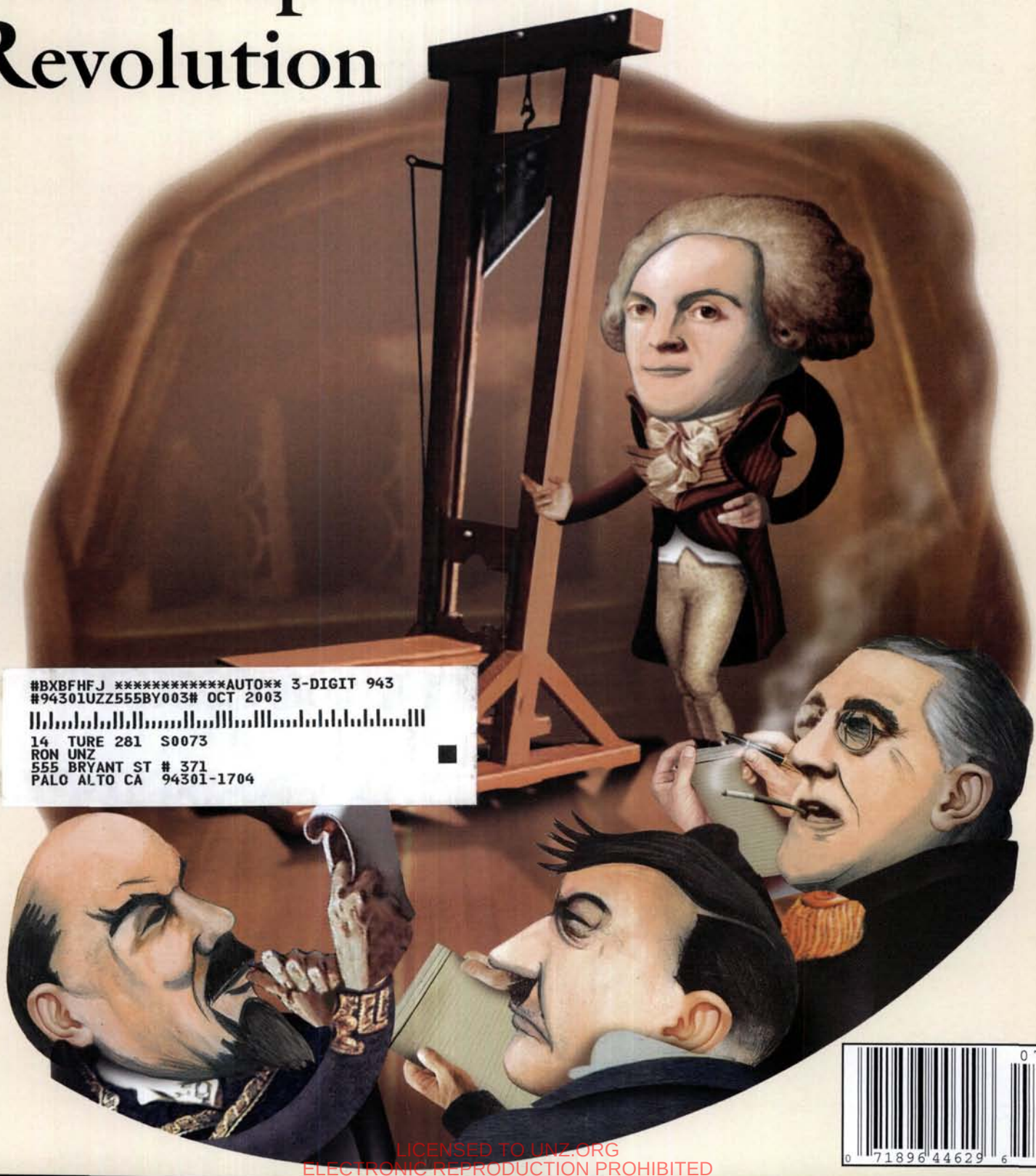
The Perpetual Revolution



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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On Millennia

Aaron D. Wolf's ranting and caustic assault on premillenarians and dispensational premillenarians ("Apocalypse Now," *Views*, April) is making some of us wonder what kind of an agenda *Chronicles* has. These are issues over which Christians have a variety of viewpoints, and a modicum of civility might be helpful. The fact is that most of the Church Fathers were chiliasts (premillennial), among them Irenaeus, Tertullian, Papias, Hippolytus. That Christ's literal rule on earth reflects a "deficient Christology and soteriology" would be news to Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Moody Bible Institute, Dallas Seminary, *etc.*—all of which are committed to historic premillennialism.

The dispensational thrust in the United States was launched in the 19th century by Dr. C.I. Scofield (a Congregationalist), Dr. James Brookes (a Presbyterian), William E. Blackwell (a Methodist), and Dr. James Gray (an Episcopalian). Augustinian amillennialism is losing out today because of its status by negation and because many see in Romans 11 something very special for ethnic Israel in the wrap-up of human history (even Karl Barth, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, and C.E.B. Cranfield, to speak of but a few). Even on dispensationalism, Mr. Wolf does not get his facts straight—the seventh dispensation is Christ's Kingdom on earth ("the Millennium") according to the Scofield Bible.

I do not think that diatribes in *Chronicles* or the rabid *Christian Century* on the issue of Christian Zionism are very helpful. Many will still choose to stand with Joachim of Fiore, the Puritans, and the Pietists on this issue. The sharp poke against revivalism and its champions such as Charles G. Finney, Billy Sunday, and Billy Graham raises a false dichotomy—either doctrinal orthodoxy or a "heart religion." Many of us reasonably believe that Christianity can be both. I had hoped for a more judicious and thoughtful analysis of these issues on which Christians hold differing views.

—David L. Larsen
Deerfield, IL

Mr. Wolf Replies:

Dr. Larsen, who teaches at my *alma mater*, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, is right: The fifth (not the sixth) dispensation is the one called "Law," and the sixth is "Grace," the Church Age.

The "caustic" language of my article is directed not toward evangelical Christians but toward the neoconservative Republicans and some Israeli nationalists who offer them false friendship in order to gain power.

And there is plenty to "rant" about when it comes to the shameless apocalyptic marketing tactics of the likes of Timothy LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins, the now-fabulously wealthy authors of the *Left Behind* series. Following in Hal Lindsey's footsteps, they have captured the imaginations of millions of evangelicals, leading them away from the glorious icon of Christ presented in the Book of Revelation: "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." All theology (so the Lutheran saying goes) is Christology, and that includes eschatology, the study of last things. The word is singular: It is the Book of the *Revelation* of Jesus Christ, not of the adventures of reporter Buck Williams, who romances Chloe Steel while fighting Antichrist Nikolae Carpathia.

My article dealt with the most popular view of last things among evangelical Christians: dispensational premillennialism. It is true, however, that another form of premillennialism exists: *historic premillennialism*, sometimes called *chiliasm*. This view, which disavows the trappings of the seven dispensations and somewhat deemphasizes the notion of a unique role for national Israel in the last days, is popular mostly among evangelical scholars, many of whom have shrunk away from the fantastic claims of dispensationalism. At places like Trinity, for example, you will find representatives of both kinds of premillennialism. (Their bookstores always carry the latest *Left Behind* book, however, and I do not think that it is accurate to say that Trinity, Moody, or Dallas Theological Seminary—the epicenter

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of dispensationalist thought—is "committed to historic premillennialism" in contradiction to dispensationalism.)

Historic premillennialists often claim that they have recovered the eschatology of the Church Fathers, and it is true that, following the apocalyptic literature of first-century rabbinical scholars who taught a Creation day-age theory (2 Enoch, for example, taught that there would be six millennia of human history followed by a seventh in which the Messiah would rule from Jerusalem), Papias, Justin, Tertullian, and Hippolytus believed that a thousand-year reign of Christ on earth would precede eternity. What about Clement of Rome, the *Shepherd of Hermas*, the *Didache*, Ignatius, Polycarp, Origen, Tyconius, Methodius, Jerome, and Eusebius? These all teach that next on God's calendar are the Second Coming, the Resurrection, and the Judgment (what is today called amillennialism). After Augustine, premillennialism faded from the scene, though Joachim of Fiore, a severe Cistercian monk, did revive some aspects of it during the 12th century—in addition to any number of heresies regarding the "Age of the Holy Spirit," which prefigure some of the most extreme aspects of dispensationalism. (A helpful treatment of these distinctions is Reformed theologian Kim Riddlebarger's new book, *A Case for Amillennialism*, published by Baker Books.)

Dr. Larsen is also right to assert that theology and piety are not mutually exclusive. It is, in fact, intense devotion to orthodoxy that produces true "religious affections" (to borrow from Jonathan Edwards). But the legacy of Charles Finney (a Pelagian), Billy Sunday (a megalomaniac) and Billy Graham (whose syncretistic evangelism, despite his sincerity, has infected both evangelical and mainline churches) is an American Christianity that exchanges 1,800 years of traditional theology and piety for altar calls, decision theology, and speculation about the rapture and the Antichrist and—in most cases, unwittingly—pushes the biblical and traditional apocalyptic vision of Christ and His Kingdom, which is not of this world (until He brings it on the last day), aside.

On the *Kibei*

I have one small addition to Roger D. McGrath's excellent piece, "You Have to Commit" (*Views*, April).

The *kibei* (American-born Japanese educated in Japan before World War II) and other Japanese-Americans involved in the Hokoku Seinen Dan not only regularly demonstrated at the Tule Lake Segregation Center in support of the emperor and the empire but actively petitioned the U.S. government to allow them to return to Japan with the explicit intent of joining the fight against the United States.

As John L. Burling stated in a January 10, 1945, letter replying to these petitions on behalf of the attorney general: "In the first place, the members of the Hokoku Seinen Dan are almost all American Citizens. . . . Yet in time of war these young men, who were born in this country, have betrayed it and have demonstrated their loyalty to the enemy. They are not patriots, but traitors. . . . [T]hey are a disgrace and a shame to their brother Japanese-Americans who have proved with their blood that they understand what it means to be loyal to the country of one's birth."

It is hard to imagine the chaos that would have reigned on the West Coast had several thousand fanatics been allowed to run loose while the United States was taking tens of thousands of casualties in the Philippines, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. The evacuation was ordered largely to allow for the separation of the loyal from the disloyal, and, generally, it served that purpose.

To date, the thousands of disloyals have not apologized for putting loyal Japanese-Americans through their evacuation experience, but their disgrace and shame were ameliorated with a $20,000 check and an apology from the United States government. What a country!

—Lt. Col Lee Allen (Ret.)
Provo, UT

Dr. McGrath Replies:

Only being a captain, I'll have to defer to the colonel. Actually, Colonel Allen has it absolutely right. I might also add that his Athena Press is the publisher of David D. Lowman's *MAGIC: The Untold Story of U.S. Intelligence and the Evacuation of Japanese Residents From the West Coast During WW II*. The book should be required reading for all those who think they know something about the evacuation. There have been more lies spread about this event than any other in American history. In 1983, the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians presented a report to Congress that included no references to MAGIC, the top-secret decryptions of Japanese transmissions that revealed widespread espionage activities by resident Japanese (both aliens and American citizens) on the West Coast. This was something akin to omitting Japanese tactics on Iwo Jima and Okinawa (including *kamikaze* attacks) in a discussion of Truman's decision to drop the bomb. The Commission never intended to investigate the evacuation honestly. Only at the last minute did it bother to hear testimony from John J. McCloy, one of only two men alive who were intimately involved at the highest levels with the evacuation. The assistant secretary of war during World War II, McCloy reported to Secretary of War Henry Stimson on the evacuation and relocation. During McCloy's testimony, spectators hissed and booed and stamped their feet and shouted, almost drowning out the octogenarian. "From my personal appearance at the hearings of the Commission," said McCloy in a letter to Sen. Charles Grassley, "I believe its conduct was a horrendous affront to our tradition for fair and objective hearings. . . . [I]t became clear from the outset of my testimony that the Commission was not at all disposed to conduct an objective investigation." The other man still living was Col. Karl R. Bendetsen, who was in charge of the evacuation in 1942. When he appeared before the Commission, the spectators made so much noise that he was unable to complete his testimony. "I knew it would be fruitless," said Bendetsen. "Every commissioner had made up his mind before he was appointed." The Commission's report was a rewrite of history in the tradition of Oceania in Orwell's *1984*. Somewhere, Winston Smith quietly recorded the event in his diary.

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by Srdja Trifkovic

A Surprising Unsureness of Touch

The one surprising aspect of the controversy surrounding Iraq's "weapons of mass destruction" is not the failure to find them: Those in the know had known all along that they did not exist. It is, rather, the Bush administration's inept handling of a situation that should have been anticipated months ago, when the "bureaucratic" decision was initially made to opt for WMD's as the *casus belli*. Morality and common decency aside, the administration did not do well in following up those pre-war WMD stories with sufficiently convincing postwar justifications and rationalizations. The haughtiness of its leading figures is irritating to America's friends and foes alike and, thus, self-defeating even within the neocon calculus of what constitutes this country's interest.

Goading the designated enemy into striking first or inventing justifications for preordained wars is nothing new. It has been a time-honored tradition of democracies since the Athenian leadership of the Hellenic world turned into hegemony in the fifth century B.C. The process calls for some creativity on the part of proactive minds. It demands a mix of amoral cynicism and manipulative skill—the very qualities that have defined successful political operatives across the centuries.

Most of the time, it works well. Everyone "remembered" the *Maine* when it mattered, even though the cause of her explosion remains uncertain 105 years later. When the British stage-managed the sinking of the *Lusitania* on May 7, 1915, by ensuring that the Germans were informed of the illicit cargo of munitions that made her a legitimate military target, Churchill & Co. knew that the facts would not become known until long after the utility of the incident—the decisive shift of American public opinion in favor of entering the war—had been fully exploited. With Pearl Harbor, the precise sequence of events remains in dispute, but FDR's mendacity in the proceedings is beyond reasonable doubt. The "genocides" in Bosnia and Kosovo did not happen, but the story behind Racak and Rambouillet did not have the capacity to inflame public debate once those wars were safely over.

To assume, however, that the same sleight-of-hand could be applied to the missing WMD's, after a propaganda blitz lasting more than a year, was either naive or arrogant.

Naiveté is not a natural Washingtonian trait, but it is at least conceivable that some members of President Bush's team—his secretary of state, for example—actually believed that those weapons existed and needed to be eliminated. Politicians can be wrong in making threat assessments and sincere in their delusions. Anthony Eden overestimated the danger of Colonel Nasser in 1956. The Soviets' chronic (and ultimately self-defeating) exaggeration of the threat from the West was not just propaganda; Stalin's paranoia came to be internalized by the members of the political elite. Likewise, it is possible that some of the "evidence" concerning Saddam's arsenal was used by the War Party in order to cajole the leading "dove" into making the Bush administration's WMD case to the world. If this is so, Mr. Powell's only honorable course is to resign. If not, Mr. Powell is guilty of having aided and abetted those who quietly despise him—and, worse still for a political operative, he is guilty of having done so at no profit to himself.

Unlike one or two innocents who may have been duped, the WMD spinmasters were not delusional. They have known all along that no "evidence" would be found. They may even have been tempted to consider planting some, but the difficulties are considerable. No outright conspiracy is safe when a six-figure book contract beckons the potential whistleblower, and the forensic tools of the skeptics were potentially fatal: Nobody wanted Hans Blix nixing the "find" in front of a hundred cameras.

A fallback position was needed. From the architects of the war, we could have expected a degree of evasive humility and a shift to the positive "fruits" of the regime change. Some media apologists for the administration have developed this very theme—notably Andrew Sullivan, who says that "the liberation of Iraq was a moral obligation under any circumstances." This view implies that there may have been less than meets the eye regarding those weapons, but the policy itself—however justified—was essentially sound because it yielded the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers.

For the self-designated masters of the universe, however, any attempt at moral self-justification smacks of unmanly weakness. Paul Wolfowitz's *Vanity Fair* admission—that, for bureaucratic reasons, "we settled on one issue, weapons of mass destruction, because it was the one reason everyone could agree on"—has the refreshing quality of truthfulness. Wolfowitz's debonair arrogance is less morally flawed than Sullivan's sophistry; it is certainly preferable to Blair's nauseating sanctimony.

At the level of pragmatic policymaking, however, the problem with the undersecretary of defense's approach is that it is not rational: It does not maximize the power of his government or minimize its liabilities. As a distinguished professor of international politics, Wolfowitz should realize that, by admitting that he and his colleagues had taken everyone for a ride, he ensures that the exercise cannot be repeated.

Thus, for instance, the reaction of Sir Max Hastings, former editor of London's *Daily Telegraph*, the flagship of traditional Toryism. "I was silly to trust America," he now declares. "[G]iven the behaviour of the US Administration, that case is in tatters . . . [A] heavy blow has been struck against our faith in American rhetoric and judgment."

Let us assume you are a benevolent global hegemonist who wants to take out Iran next, by political subversion and isolation and—if need be—military action. To tackle a large country of 60 million, with a well-trained military, an efficient civil service, and substantial oil-based revenues, you need a Blair or two to help you along. It might also be useful to call on the U.N. Security Council, if you decide that the next exercise needs a veneer of international legitimacy. It makes no sense to tell such allies point blank that they are suckers; it may awaken their sense of self-respect. The neoconservatives may want to develop a kinder, gentler variety of world management soon—certainly before they start preparing for the next war to make the Middle East safe for democracy. c

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SERGEY YUSHENKOV's murder on April 17 may have been the result of machinations aimed at destroying Russian President Vladimir Putin politically and personally, as well as undermining U.S.-Russia relations, seemingly on track again after the rift over Iraq. Gunned down outside his Moscow apartment, Yushenkov, the leader of the Liberal Russia political party, joins a lengthening list of Russian luminaries slain in gangland-style hits in recent years.

Yushenkov was a harsh critic of the "oligarchy" as it evolved under Boris Yeltsin and his "family," the loose network of Yeltsin associates that remains the dominant force in Russian politics and economics today. Ironically, Yushenkov had lately become associated with "oligarch-in-exile" and determined Putin foe Boris Abramovich Berezovsky (BAB), who has financed the Liberal Russia project from his mansion near London, while fighting attempts by Moscow to have him extradited to face embezzlement charges. With support from Berezovsky-backed media, Yushenkov was also involved in conducting an unofficial investigation of possible FSB (the domestic-security successor to the KGB; Putin is a former KGB/FSB officer) involvement in the 1999 terrorist bombings, allegedly carried out by Chechen terrorists, that helped get Putin elected president.

One pundit claimed that the murder was the result of Yushenkov's connections to Berezovsky, an indirect "punishment"—and a warning—to BAB. Berezovsky himself was bolder, telling reporters that he had "one question" regarding the murder: Was Putin "informed about the murder happening or about the murder being carried out?" BAB answered his own question: "I think the latter would be more correct."

No Russian commentator, however, has dared raise one theory that is making the rounds among Kremlinologists: The murder was likely connected to efforts by Berezovsky to collect *kompromat* ("compromising materials") on President Putin. Following Putin's falling-out with Berezovsky and his subsequent election to the presidency in March 2000, BAB-connected media began dropping hints that the Russian president was *goluboy* ("powder blue")—a homosexual. The *goluboy* theme has recurred in Russian media ever since, suggesting that BAB, and possibly others, were warding Putin off with threats of exposure, something that could be devastating to him both politically and personally.

Since then, Berezovsky has claimed Putin was involved in narcotics trafficking. BAB's claims were followed by articles in Russian newspapers asserting that Russian military and security personnel have long been involved in the Central Asian drug trade, with the trade network targeting the West as its primary market. The main trade route reportedly originated during the Soviet era, using the Western Group of Forces, stationed in East Germany, as a transit stop on the way to the West. Perhaps not coincidently, KGB officer Putin was stationed in East Germany at one point. Moreover, in May, German officials reopened an investigation of a St. Petersburg-based real-estate firm for which Putin once worked as a consultant: According to European press sources, German law-enforcement agencies believe that, among other things, the firm was using connections in Germany to launder drug money.

The timing of the articles on drug trafficking, the reopening of the German investigation, and the continuing recurrence of the *goluboy* theme in Russian media suggest that the real target is Putin himself—and that BAB is using his connections in Russia and Europe to undermine the president. The drug materials are likely aimed at discrediting Putin in the West, even as Moscow has renewed ties with Washington after the rift over Iraq and has strengthened Russian ties with Europe. If BAB has hard evidence of a secret Putin *goluboy* life, then that material could be used to destroy him as a public figure in Russia.

Berezovsky, who has attempted to portray himself as a persecuted dissident, may be hoping to interest the United States, among others, in the dirt he has gathered on Putin. Whatever the nature of the *kompromat*, the Bush administration should not become involved in the intrigues that are part and parcel of Russian politics (BAB may desire Western help in his political war on Putin), nor should such *kompromat* prevent cooperation with Russia on important matters, such as possible Russian help in securing an Israeli-Palestinian peace settlement. Washington's relationship with Moscow is strategic. Given the criminalized nature of Russian politics, it is extremely doubtful that any Putin replacement BAB or other parties may have in mind would be a more desirable interlocutor than the current occupant of the Kremlin. In any case, Washington should work to depersonalize relations with foreign leaders: The United States has an interest in cooperation with Russia, unencumbered by any illusions about the postcommunist system or Putin himself.

—Wayne Allensworth

BEIRUT'S OCCUPATION in 1983 by U.S. Marines may provide a small-scale sample of what a prolonged U.S. occupation of Iraq could be like, should the Pollyannaish postwar scenarios of some members of the War Party fail to materialize. Of course, the two situations are, in some ways, very different. Beirut, for instance, is just a city, while Iraq is a country spanning 169,000 square miles with a population in excess of 20 million and, thus, will require many more than the roughly 1,300 men that the Reagan administration placed at Beirut International Airport. And the Beirut occupation was but a blip on the political radar screen for the Reagan administration compared to the importance of Iraq to George W. Bush in 2003—and 2004.

A key similarity between the two counties is their multicultural diversity. Lebanon was split between Christians and Muslims. A power-sharing arrangement between the two groups dissolved when the Muslim population grew, in part because the country absorbed Palestinian refugees. By the early 1980's, Lebanon had been embroiled in civil war and chaos for seven years. Iraq, on the other hand, is overwhelmingly Islamic, but a Sunni minority dominates the Shiite majority. The situation is complicated by the presence of a large Kurdish minority (about 20 percent).

In June 1982, Israel invaded southern Lebanon in order to expel the Palestine Liberation Organization. U.S. Marines first landed—with rifles unloaded—in August of that year, in order to cover the PLO's retreat. When the withdrawal was complete, the Marines returned to their ships in the Mediterranean. But turmoil

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generated by two events brought the Marines back ashore as part of a multinational force along with French, Italian, and, later, British troops. The first event was the assassination of Lebanese president-elect Bashir Gemayel; the second was a massacre carried out by Lebanese Christian gunmen, supported and armed by Israel, against Palestinian refugees in camps under Israeli control.

When the Marines returned, they were under orders to "establish a presence"—a rather passive-sounding command for America's premier fighting force—at the BIA. The early part of the occupation was relatively uneventful. The tone of the mission was set by the constraining rules of engagement, which kept the weapons of the Marines unloaded and forced them to call in to request permission to return fire. They were also not allowed to fire on anyone not currently firing on them. Muslim militiamen could simply cease fire, sling their weapons, and walk right past the Marines, knowing that they would not be attacked.

Maj. Bob Jordan (USMC, retired), the public-affairs officer in Beirut from August to November 1983 and a former president of the Beirut Veterans of America (*www.beirutveterans.com*), wrote in *Leatherneck* in 1989 that a superior warned him not to allow his men to have their pistols loaded because of the "concern at the time that there was more danger from accidental shootings than from any attacker." (Ironically, the final Marine to die in Beirut perished in an accidental shooting.)

The first time a Marine returned fire was in April 1983. The incident, which involved no injury, was quickly overshadowed by the suicide bombing of the American embassy in Beirut. After the attack, which killed 63 people (most of them Lebanese), President Reagan stated that "this criminal act on a diplomatic establishment will not deter us from our goals of peace in the region . . . We will do what we know to be right." The *New York Times* reported that Reagan's statement "generally seemed to match the mood on Capitol Hill, with most members of Congress who spoke on the issue saying that the explosion should not be allowed to set back American efforts." Sen. Barry Goldwater disagreed. He called for the withdrawal of the Marines, prophetically saying, "I think we're headed for trouble."

The Marines of the 24th MAU (Marine Amphibious Unit), along with the Lebanese army, clashed with Shiite militiamen on Sunday, August 28, 1983. The next day, the headline in the *Chicago Tribune* screamed, "U.S. Marines return fire in Beirut." The first American combat deaths—2nd Lt. George D. Losey and Staff Sgt. Alexander M. Ortega—would come the next day.

The fighting that the Marines engaged in and the casualties that they sustained caused a stir in Washington. The *New York Times* reported on September 1, 1983, that "the Reagan Administration reiterated today that there was no reason to say the marines in Lebanon were the targets of Moslem militia units or that they were engaged in hostilities. It was the third such statement in as many days."

The Reagan administration was concerned about triggering the War Powers Act. An admission that the Marines were engaged in combat would allow the Congress to require a troop withdrawal in 90 days; thus, Secretary of State George Schultz told the world that the Marines "are involved in a situation where there is violence, a generalized pattern of violence."

The situation faced by the troops, however, was much different. A *Chicago Tribune* report on the August 28 fighting described a 90-minute battle, which is hardly consistent with the notion of a "generalized pattern of violence." Eric Hammel's history of the occupation, *The Root*, describes the fighting on August 29 occurring over several hours as the Marines took fire against their positions in the vicinity of the Beirut International Airport.

The Marines would continue to sustain casualties from the fighting, including two more deaths in the month of September, while the Reagan administration maintained that the Marines were not engaged in hostilities. The commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. P.X. Kelly, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee—amid calls for Congress to invoke the War Powers Act—that "imminent hostilities, as it exists in my professional view, is not the case, so far as we the Marines are concerned. We have no firm evidence, no firm indication, that any of the rockets, mortar, or artillery rounds that have impacted within our perimeter have been specifically designed against Marines."

In early September, Robert McFarlane, the special envoy to the Middle East, requested that the 24th MAU's commanding officer, Col. Tim Geraghty, order naval gunfire in support of the Lebanese army. Geraghty eventually complied, but not before prophetically telling a McFarlane associate that "we'll get slaughtered down here."

The Marines would soon suffer an assault that no reasonable person could deny was aimed at them. In the early morning hours of Sunday, October 23, 1983, a suicide bomber in a yellow Mercedes truck drove up to the headquarters building, through a barrier of concertina wire and past several sentries on duty, and detonated his explosives. The blast destroyed the four-story structure, lifting it off of the ground and leaving a pile of rubble, body parts, and some survivors trapped in the debris. The explosion killed 220 Marines, 18 sailors and 3 soldiers.

Before the attack, Colonel Geraghty had been concerned about the dangers his Marines faced, but he was constrained from taking necessary measures to protect them. Hammel writes that Geraghty "made guarded entreaties through the chain of command in hope of being allowed to dig in deeper, but each request was rebuffed with a warning that Beirut International Airport (BIA) could not be fortified." Major Jordan, who arrived in Beirut just as things were heating up, described for me some of the errors that made the Marines vulnerable: "The first mistake was to force the Multinational Forces into static positions. The second was to place too many troops on the ground as a 'presence' while denying the commander enough forces to be a viable deterrent."

Jordan stated that the Shiite militiamen were (correctly, as it happens) convinced that America's political leadership would lose its will if they could inflict large-scale (200 to 500) casualties on the Marines. When the suicide bomber struck, the Shiites succeeded: The United States withdrew in February 1984.

In the aftermath of the bombing, President Reagan called on the country to continue the mission in Beirut and to "be more determined than ever that they cannot take over that vital and strategic area of the earth." But concerns about the ill-defined nature of the mission and analogies to Vietnam kept coming up. Sen. Robert Byrd stated that "at present our people are just sitting ducks where they don't even know who is attacking them."

A special commission headed by a retired admiral criticized Colonel Geraghty and his chain of command. A House subcommittee also laid some of the blame on Marine Commandant Kelley. But it is hard to dispute the words of Cleta Wells,

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a Beirut widow, who told *Newsweek*, "It was not the Marine Corps that kept saying it was a peacekeeping mission . . . It was not Col. Geraghty who told them not to fire back . . . My husband was a Marine for 17 years and he was a good Marine . . . And no group of men in white shirts and ties are going to sit and blame the Marine Corps for his death."

The occupation and small war that the Marines participated in 20 years ago in Beirut is largely forgotten today. A total of 266 U.S. servicemen—most of them Marines—died there. (Compare that to the 305 American lives lost in the first Gulf War.) The details of the Beirut occupation may seem more relevant now that U.S. troops are attempting to keep Iraq from coming apart at the seams. President Reagan removed the Marines at minimal political cost and with no harm to our national security (though he may have emboldened later terrorists). I fear that, 42 Americans having been killed since "major combat" ended, Iraqis who want Americans out of their country have decided that what worked in Beruit will work for them as well.

—*Clark Stooksbury*

JUNE CARTER CASH, R.I.P. On May 15, at the age of 73, a living country-music legend died from complications following heart surgery at Nashville's Baptist Hospital, with her husband of 35 years at her side. Her life is a testament to the cultural heritage of the rural South, and the news of her death seems all the more bitter when we ponder the fate of those traditions.

Those who think of June Carter merely as the wife of Johnny Cash betray their ignorance of the once original and lovely genre that has now degenerated into such spectacles as Garth Brooks smashing guitars on stage and Toby Keith bashing the Dixie Chicks over the honor of President George W. Bush.

June Carter was born two years after her mother, Maybelle, and her aunt and uncle, Sara and A.P. Carter, gave birth to country music. In 1927, Victor Records' Ralph Peer toured the rural South in an effort to find representatives of "old-time" music to record. Among others, he found the blue yodeler, Jimmie Rodgers, and the Carter Family of the Clinch Mountains of Virginia. Like a Negro bluesman, Rodgers, accompanying himself on the guitar, sang of poverty, heartache, and toil; the Carters, on the other hand, carried on the Appalachian traditions of Celtic folk song mixed with shape-note Gospel music, which placed great emphasis on the blessed hope of Heaven that awaits believers in Jesus immediately after death. This music reflected the suffering and faith of the people of the rural South, where, after a brutal week of work in the fields, families and friends gathered on Saturday night to fiddle and dance and, on Sunday morning, to worship the Lord. Those connected both to each other and to the land knew the importance of the family circle and the blood of Jesus. To them, the Carters sang, "Will the circle be unbroken / By and by, Lord, by and by? / There's a better home awaitin' / In the sky, Lord, in the sky."

No matter how hard the dominant culture tried to reconstruct the South, folks like the Carters hung on to their traditions, preserved in song. June grew up on the back of her Uncle A.P.'s truck, traveling to barn dances and radio shows where she and her sisters, Anita and Helen, learned from Mother Maybelle how to ease the burden of working people with humor, harmony, and memories, through such songs as "Wildwood Flower," "Worried Man Blues," and "Keep on the Sunny Side."

In 1942, Mother Maybelle and the Carter Sisters picked up the mantle of the Original Carter Family, and June sang with them into her 20's, when director Elia Kazan, enraptured by her simple but sophisticated humor, told her that she should be an actor. June studied acting in New York with Lee Strasberg before returning to Tennessee in the 50's to sing backup for Elvis Presley with her family (turning down a Woody Allen variety show). The King introduced her to fellow Sun recording artist John R. Cash, whom the wiley Sam Phillips had renamed Johnny.

John had grown up among sharecroppers at the Dyess Colony in northeast Arkansas (as did my grandfather), where he listened to Carter Family records and longed to play his mother's guitar. (Far from Garth Brooks, John's mother scraped together payments for a flattop that the family treasured until the Depression took it away.) In 1950, he had heard June and her family on the Grand Ole Opry; by 1961, June had joined The Johnny Cash Show, singing and telling stories. She also began to fall in love with him, though she knew that it was wrong: He was on the verge of divorce because of his addiction to prescription drugs. Frustrated, she turned to an old book of Elizabethan poetry that Uncle A.P. had given her, on which she found the words "Love is a ring of fire" underlined. She wrote: "Love is a burning thing / and it makes a fiery ring. / Bound by wild desire, / I fell into a ring of fire."

Johnny Cash recorded "Ring of Fire," one of his greatest hits, in 1963. Five years later, they married. June never shrank from saying that John was the love of her life, and, after they wed, she devoted herself to marriage and family, leaving behind her aspirations for stardom. John credits her love and perseverance with helping him kick his drug problem (apparently more than once). Though she was a member of the first family of country music, June preferred to live in John's shadow and sing, for the most part, with and for her family. She wrote songs for John ("Jackson") and played small roles in film and television (most notably, Robert Duvall's mother in *The Apostle*). In 1999, she recorded an acoustic album, *Press On*, which won her a Grammy.

In a memoir, as she reflected on that "Ring of Fire" that brought her and John together, Mrs. Cash confessed: "Christ died for people like me. People who mess up their lives and stand shaking in their boots with guilt, wondering if they're really going straight to hell. But he tells us to repent . . . That's what I did."

At her funeral, her "stepdaughter" (June never called her that) Roseanne said in a eulogy: "Recently, a friend was talking to her about the historical significance of the Carter Family, and her remarkable place in the lexicon of American music. He asked her what she thought her legacy would be. She said softly, 'Oh, I was just a mother.'" May the circle be unbroken.

—*Aaron D. Wolf*

OBITER DICTA: Our poetry this month is provided by **David Middleton.** Dr. Middleton, the poet-in-residence at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, Louisiana, is poetry editor for the *Classical Outlook* (University of Georgia) and the *Anglican Theological Review*. His books of verse include *The Burning Fields* (1991) and *Beyond the Chandeleurs* (1999), both on LSU Press.

Our art this month is provided by **Jeff Drew** of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Mr. Drew, who originally hails from Indiana, is a software developer specializing in computer graphic design.

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by Thomas Fleming

It Was the Worst of Times

The French Revolution was a cancer that metastasized and spread through Western societies, weakening them to the point of collapse. Even the European and American right did not escape being contaminated by the forces they struggled against, and, certainly, by the end of the 19th century, it was increasingly difficult to frame a conservative argument that did not accommodate some basic principles of the Revolution.

Even before the Revolution, there were two Frances, the France of ordinary people—of the rich countryside and its traditions, of Joan of Arc, of the Church—and the France of the intellectuals—the country of atheism, immorality, and class warfare. After the Revolution, the gap widened and deepened. On one side were all those republicans and revolutionaries who had profited from the Revolution and saw the murder of the king and queen as the fulfillment (or even the beginning) of human history. On the other were not just supporters of the *ancien régime* but all serious Catholics and anyone who took seriously the social nature of man. Even among the republicans, there were those who pined for the solidity of the old institutions of French community life, and, as Robert Nisbet showed in *The Sociological Tradition*, French social theorists, while repudiating the old monarchy, longed to recreate the stability of a world dominated by the certainties of the king and the Church.

Politically, the 19th century saw many swings of the pendulum from right to left, but the rightward swing was always shorter. Increasingly, an official French national culture was recreated. While perpetuating the myths of the Revolution and republic, this official history also tried to incorporate them into the previous history and to make them acceptable to Catholics. And yet, despite the growing accommodation to Jacobin doctrines, every generation produced outstanding reactionary writers: Chateaubriand, in the decades following the Revolution; the novelist Balzac, who in early life was an unabashed monarchist and whose satires on the dreariness and greed of bourgeois republican France have sometimes been mistaken for leftist attacks. Even such an avant-garde poet as Baudelaire, who reveled in immorality, was deeply dissatisfied with republican France and died a Catholic.

The counterrevolutionary tradition was still alive in the first three decades of the 20th century, and it is not too much to say that many of France's greatest writers were reactionaries of one kind or another. The greatest, perhaps, was Charles Péguy, a writer virtually unknown in America.

Ignorance of Péguy extends even to literary "scholars" who write essays on him. In a condescending article in the *New Criterion*, neoconservative critic Roger Kimball quotes the poet's most famous lines—the long passage of *Eve* beginning "*Heureux ceux qui sont morts*" and attributes them to the beginning of the poem, when, in fact, they come roughly a hundred pages into a poem that the scholar has obviously not read.

In his early years, Péguy was probably the outstanding socialist revolutionary intellectual in France at the turn of the 20th century, admired and feared by the Socialist Party leaders Jean Jaurès and Léon Blum, friend of the syndicalist Georges Sorel, collaborator with future Stalinist Romain Rolland. In the second half of his career, Péguy was among the most brilliant and original Christian writers of the 20th century.

Péguy was born to a poor family in 1874, and he never lost the peasant qualities—both good and bad—of his ancestors. Even as a child, his brilliance and independence were observable, and he was given a classical education. Scholarships allowed this son of a poor working-class family eventually to attend a prestigious *lycée* in Paris and the École Normale. Remembering his childhood, Péguy remarks that he was given two educations—one by the masters of his republican school, the other by the priests who taught him his catechism: "The young priests taught us exactly the opposite of what the young student-teachers taught us." And yet, as his friend and collaborator Daniel Halévy observed, "The forms of his belief never changed: they remained those he learned at school and in the parish. His devotion shifted from one to the other, but there was no innovation and nothing was discarded."

Although he was a nominal Catholic most of his early life, he stopped going to Mass in his teens, because he could not accept the doctrine of damnation. As a student and young man, he gave his heart entirely to the world of the revolutionary republic and to the unfinished business of the Revolution. As a student in Paris, he quickly attached himself to revolutionary and socialist circles, and his fellow students, who admired him intensely, were forever being hit up for money to support this strike or that leftist cause.

By the time he was a student at the École Normale, he was a known figure, associating with the leading socialists of his day. He took a year off from studies and politics, however, to return home. The pretext was a problem he was having with his eyes, but his real purpose was to write a verse play on Joan of Arc, his first attempt at a subject that would inspire his masterpiece *La Mystère de la charité de Jeanne d'Arc*. He raised a subscription among his friends to publish the work handsomely, and it is known to have sold at least one copy.

Péguy's leftist activism reached a fever pitch during the Dreyfus affair. Some encyclopedias say that he was the leading Catholic supporting Dreyfus, the Jewish officer apparently railroaded on treason charges, but, in fact, he was not a Catholic at that time, only a revolutionary intellectual. France in 1899 was a powder keg, and street clashes almost provided the lit fuse. (The situation was so dangerous that a rightist coup was in the works.) It was after Dreyfus' vindication that Péguy started his most ambitious project, the publication of the *Cahiers de Quinzaine*—the *Fortnightly Notebooks*, whose first issue came out in 1900. Funding came not only from his well-placed socialist friends but also from his wife and brother-in-law.

At this time, the poet was sympathetic to the ideals of Christianity, but he still could not accept the dogma on damnation, which he called "that strange combination of life and death . . . no man whose lot is cast with humanity can give his assent to this." The *Cahiers* was among

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the most influential periodicals of the 20th century, and, at the height of its popularity, its circulation climbed to 1,000, which made it a success in a country that weighs ideas instead of counting them. (In America, this would be the equivalent of 6,000, lower than that of *Chronicles*.)

For the first nine years, the *Cahiers* took up, more or less, the revolutionary side in French political struggles, though Péguy declared there were only two real sides: those who paid in to the community—the workers, producers, creators—and those who were paid—bureaucrats, government contractors, state-supported Church functionaries. He declared himself on the side of those who paid, which makes him the French equivalent of a populist. He became convinced, after the Tangiers incident in 1905, that the German kaiser was bent on war and that it was France's destiny to defend her free and spiritual civilization against an amoral and regimented nation, and he warned his fellow countrymen not to think that a mobilization for war was a good reason to sacrifice their freedom or emulate the Prussian system.

When challenged by a friend to defend a sentence in which he said "events" would decide the future on the battlefield—events do not have a will, after all—he replied that he would have written "God," but his republican readers would not understand. *Give me a couple of years*, he went on, *and I will write the name of God*. It was not, however, until 1909 that he did so, in his masterpiece on Joan of Arc. Péguy "saw everything through her eyes," says Halevy, and, when a Catholic intellectual accused him of rejecting scholarship and following popular myth, he replied: "What does this imply, if not that there is a Jeanne d'Arc for simple folk, who is a legend and a saint, and a Jeanne d'Arc for cultured people, who is the real one and no saint?"

Péguy's growing conservatism and his declaration of Catholic faith attracted the attention but not the support of the leaders of the French intellectual right, Maurice Barrès and Charles Maurras. Both were deeply suspicious of the poet's leftist background—the Dreyfus case had divided all of France—and they may well have been made vaguely uneasy by his passionate conviction. Maurras was more of a nationalist than a conservative Catholic, and there is more than a little evidence that his loyalty to the traditions of the Church did not entail either faith or even obedience to the Holy See. Like most nationalists, Maurras spoke only of restoring the true France, even if it meant killing the ordinary people who were false-French, the citizens, as he put it, of Anti-France.

There is some truth in Maurras' analysis. Like Anti-America, which celebrates only the enemies of its traditions, Anti-France has done its best to marginalize or eliminate the greatest spokesmen for France. Decades after his friend's death, Daniel Halevy pointed out that official French textbooks had pronounced Valéry, Proust, and Gide the greatest French writers of this period—the first an atheist, the latter two homosexual degenerates—while the real France would award the prize to Paul Claudel, Barrès, Maurras, and Péguy—all Christian conservatives of one kind or another.

Péguy was never very clear or consistent in his politics. He was a man of the spirit, a mystic who believed that Catholic France could be restored through his efforts and his poetry. His entire life and imagination were bound up in the Church, and yet he did not attend Mass or overcome his wife's objections to baptizing their children. Asked what he would do to save his children, he made a vow to walk to Chartres and dedicate his family to the protection of the Blessed Virgin. Péguy's famous walk is the inspiration for the annual June pilgrimage to Chartres, though I am not sure how many of the pilgrims have his poetry.

His was a life of spiritual fasting, living only on the thin gruel of bread without the rich food of the sacraments. Most Catholic conservatives had no use for him. One of them, the academic Lavisse, cattily remarked that the poet "is a Catholic anarchist who has put holy water in his gasoline." Others said, according to Péguy, "I am on the side of the Jews, because with the Jews I can be the sort of Catholic I want to be, with the Catholics I couldn't."

Péguy responded to his critics with a series of vitriolic counterattacks, which (despite the unfair and often irrational arguments) are still read today, though his critics and enemies are long forgotten. These denunciations were not rhetorical exercises. He was, as Dr. Johnson would say, a good hater, and, in his hatred, his simple soul found it impossible to pray the Our Father. He relied only on the Hail Mary, explaining that "Prayers to Mary are reserve prayers. . . . [I]n the whole [of] the machinery of salvation the 'Ave Maria' is our last resource. With that you can't be lost." His faith was that of a peasant child, but unlike the faith of intellectuals—Charles Maurras or Graham Greene—it cannot be lost or shaken or distorted.

In the end, Péguy, at the age of 40, volunteered to fight in the war he had been predicting for ten years. In Paris, he carried on—campaigning in defense of philosopher Henri Bergson, whose works had been placed on the Index. (I think Péguy was right: Bergson, though a non-believing Jew, professed a philosophy more usable by Christians than that of many so-called Christian philosophers, such as Descartes.) He was mobilized in August 1914, at a time when his wife was expecting another child. He asked an old friend, a Jewish republican, to go to Chartres every year to pray for him. I thought this slightly mad until I heard a priest (Fr. Brian Bovee) explain that he was responsible for all the souls in his parish—Protestants, Jews, atheists, Muslims—which is why the Church is called Catholic.

As always, Lieutenant Péguy became the beloved leader of a band of brothers. The regiment was withdrawn back into the Ile de France, toward Paris, into the forest near Chantilly. Marching at night, Péguy called out "19th company on foot." Some wise guy called out from the dark, "There is no 19th left." "So long as I'm here," replied the soldier-poet, "There's a 19th." They marched toward Paris, and came to St-Witz toward Villeroy, where the battle of the Marne was just getting under way, ahead of schedule. As the shooting began, Lieutenant. Péguy was seen standing up and urging his men on. Not one of them survived the advance.

The lines he had written a year earlier in *Eve* apply to the poet himself:

> Happy are those who have died for
> the carnal earth
> But provided it was in a just war.
> Happy are those who have died for
> four corners of land.
> Happy are those who have died a
> solemn death.

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Entrance to the Forest at Barbizon in Winter

—1866-67—

after the painting by J.-F. Millet (1814-75)

by David Middleton

No springtime cows, heavy with milk or young,
Now pass the ancient gate to graze on grass
Beyond this wall of beeches dense and deep
Where birds peck up the snowflake-crusted seeds.

One stone gatepost remains, the other gone
Or crumbled into rubble in the drift
Where siftings upon siftings blow through trees,
Old matter's ghostly soul that roams the earth.

The beeches' topmost boughs branch up in V's
Outreaching to embrace down-gliding birds
Whose V-winged shapes alight on kindred limbs
Above the forest's darkened common ground.

The trees speak in a language all their own
Known only to interpreters, the birds,
Who leave their runic footprints in the snow
Before tall beeches standing there like runes.

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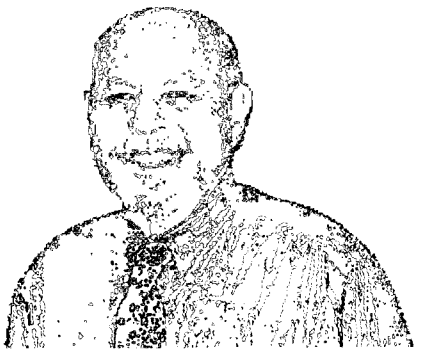
by Paul Gottfried

Le Monde, the Flesh, and the Devil

A *livre à scandale* in France this year is a heavily documented work by two veteran freelancers, writer-researcher Pierre Péan and Philippe Cohen, editor of the French satirical publication *Marianne*. *La face cachée du Monde*, which runs over 600 pages, was put out by the very independent press Mille et Une Nuit, over threats of legal action coming from the troika that now heads the newspaper *Le Monde*, General Director Jean-Marie Colombani and his associates, Edwy Plenel, a prominent Trotskyist, and neoliberal Alain Minc. Péan and Cohen provide a detailed picture of the corruption and intimidation that plague *Le Monde*, which boasts the second-largest subscriber base in France and the greatest sales and prestige abroad. Despite its usually predictably leftist positions, the newspaper has allegedly cooperated with the CIA, in return for favors, to destabilize Franco-Russian relations; has defended shaky corporations (*e.g.*, Enron) in which it had invested; and has engaged in continuing assaults on former Socialist President François Mitterand. It began to flail away at Mitterand after he removed from an executive post Pleny's plant in the national police force, the highly bribable secretary general of the FASP (fédération autonome des syndicats de police), Bernard Deleplace. Péan and Cohen list some of the political and literary celebrities whom the newspaper has gone after for transparently petty reasons, and the presses and publications that work hand-in-glove with *Le Monde*'s directors. Manuscripts are received at Robert Laffont and Gallimard in accordance with the wishes of *Le Monde*'s editorial staff, and the most influential French book-review magazine, *Livres Hebdomaires*, has become Pleny's personal preserve. (His wife and publisher hold high positions there.) Meanwhile, other magazines—for example, *Nouvel Observateur*, *Le Point*, and *Libération*—routinely second *Le Monde*'s judgments concerning literary personalities or who is or is not in sync with "human rights" as prescribed by France's "newspaper of reference." Significantly, Soviet acts of brutality were never subject to the paper's human-rights litmus test, while the morally ambiguous situation in Kosovo brought forth torrents of invective against "Serbian genocide." Contributors and editorialists went ballistic attacking "the ideological crimes" and residual "Petainist sentiments" of Régis Debray and Angelo Rinaldo, two journalists who disputed the account of events cited to justify NATO's intervention against Serbia.

The most worrisome thing about this imperial newspaper, however, goes beyond its abuse of power. *Marianne* is correct to observe that, "to have access to the columns of *Le Monde*, when one writes a political book, there is one infallible recipe: one has to be or aspire to be a Trotskyist." Beyond Pleny's start as a Trotskyist operative and editor, the editorial director has promoted leftist internationalism and ritualistic "antifascism." For example, Pleny pulled the strings behind the mealy-mouthed "*Appel à la vigilance*," which *Le Monde* brought out in 1993 over the signatures of leading French intellectuals. This document warned against the spread of "identitarian" trends and stressed the need to "take appropriate action against the impending danger." Its call was explicitly intended to criminalize the work of Alain de Benoist and of others who might drift into the "general environment" of presumed nationalist xenophobes. As one spirited nonconformist, Elisabeth Lévy, shows in *Les maîtres-censeurs* (2002), such statements, which Pleny threw together with Didier Daeninckx, betray a Trotskyist aspect, associating fascism with European nationalism and bourgeois institutions and calling for the liquidation of anything that stands in the way of a permanent cultural revolution.

There are two aspects that define this new Trotskyism, beyond the abolition of European national pasts and middle-class decencies. One is a tiresome *politique commémorative*, which recalls the evils of French fascism and the Vichy regime, blots on the national character for which the French, no matter what they do, are accused of having never inwardly atoned. This selective invocation of national history works as a club with which to beat one's opposition senseless by continually saddling them with real and imaginary Petainist evils. As Alain Besançon notes: "We are now beyond considering the [national]



past with admiration and praise. In their place now reign indignation and hate."

This is particularly the fate of past writers or artists who did not reflect or prefigure the progressive tendencies now being imposed. In 2000, *Le Monde* committed character assassination against the 19th-century composer Hector Berlioz, whose romantic sensibility was seen as preparing the way for antisemitic fascism. No substantive evidence was produced for this wooden language, except that Berlioz's opera *Les Troyens* draws on the "nationalist" poetry of Vergil. By now, the p.c. edicts of the French press are more arbitrary by far than the tastes enforced in Nazi Germany or Stalinist Russia.

The second trait of the Trotskyized *Le Monde* and its fellow travelers is hateful, scatological language directed against those who are not sufficiently sensitized. This form of discourse is often accompanied by implied calls for violence to be inflicted on celebrities of the right, particularly Jean-Marie Le Pen.

In an enlightening dossier on the Trotskyist "tolerance" practiced by *Le Monde* and its contributors, *eléments* (April 2003) quotes at length from the newspaper to underline the contradiction that "tolerance admits of no exceptions" but does not cover "criminal opinions" expressing reactionary sentiments. Thus, on May 25, 2000, 26 intellectuals, including Jacques Derrida, Philippe Sollers, and Claude Lanzmann, most of whom should be known from the "*Appel à la Vigilance*," demanded in *Le Monde* the "criminalization" of the views of Renaud Camus, an author they had obviously ceased to appreciate. Since the French left has created the legal means for such criminalization—the Loi Gayssot, passed in 1992 and enjoying the full endorsement of *Le Monde*—the signatories could pursue their totalitarian dreams in earnest. c

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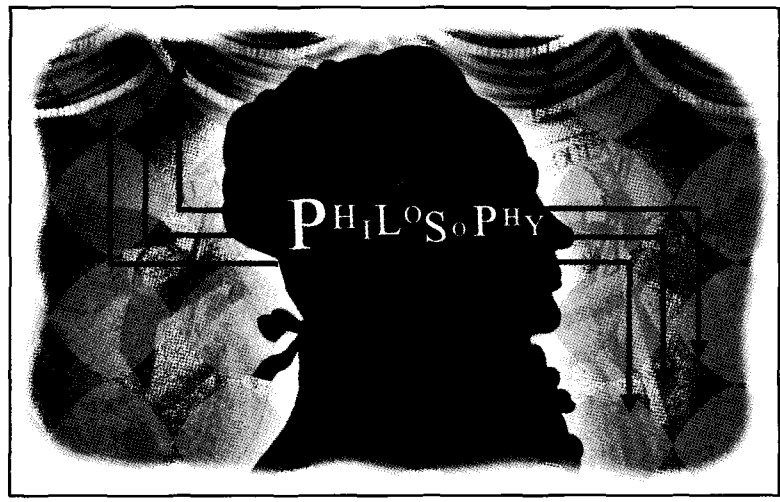
The Ancestry and Legacy of the *Philosophes*

Beyond the Enlightenment

by Donald W. Livingston



Jeff Drew

Edmund Burke records that two thirds of the Anglican clergy initially supported the French Revolution. He wrote *Reflections on the Revolution in France* to show that the Revolution was not merely an understandable effort at reform but an entirely unique intellectual and spiritual pathology. A language for this disorder of the soul did not exist in Burke's time, and his own effort to form one, though rhetorically brilliant, was not successful. Later thinkers would describe it as the work of "the Enlightenment," "ideology," "rationalism," or of an elite sect of subversive intellectuals known as the "*philosophes*" or, as they would later be called in Russia, the "intelligentsia."

These expressions are insightful, but they all presuppose that the pathology in question is unique to modern times—that, apparently from nowhere, there appeared in 18th-century Europe a perverse and destructive form of thought that is still with us. The truth, however, is that this intellectual and spiritual pathology is quite ancient and goes to the very roots of Western culture. Eric Voegelin provides a better account in describing the pathology of the French Revolution, and of later ideologies, as a modern form of gnosticism—an heretical movement within early Christianity. Certainly, there are striking parallels between gnosticism and modern ideologies, but they do not provide us with an internal understanding of how entirely secular revolutionaries think of themselves. What does provide such understanding is a form of thought that predates Christianity by six centuries—pagan Greek philosophy. Whatever it was, Greek philosophy was not a gnostic Christian heresy. It possessed a rationale distinct from Christianity or, indeed, any religion whatsoever. And it is the errors native to this peculiar form of thought that we must work through if we are to understand modern revolutionary ideologies.

The philosophical act of thought has not changed much in its essential structure from its beginning among the Greeks until today. It is built on three principles. First, the philosopher is trying to understand the ultimate nature of things—as when we ask, *What is time? or property? or justice?* When we raise such questions, we are seeking a kind of understanding that is final, unconditioned, and absolute (the principle of *ultimacy*). Second, philosophic reason is independent of, and transcends all, tradition. Philosophy cannot begin by acknowledging the independent authority of poets, priests, prophets, or founding fathers. Philosophy must be free to examine *all* assumptions and to reach judgments about them using nothing but its own pure reason untainted by prejudice (the principle of *autonomy*). Third, philosophical judgment about what is ultimately real, based on the thinker's autonomous reason, claims to rule all thought and action (the principle of *dominion*). Plato's famous doctrine that philosophers should be kings is the secret ambition of all philosophic thought.

The first to challenge philosophy as a whole were the Pyrrhonian skeptics, a sect that arose in the fourth century B.C. and flourished into the Christian era. The skeptics attacked the principle of autonomy by showing that no philosopher had ever successfully purged his thought of the external authority of tradition, instinct, and natural inclination. Further, if philosophic thought *could* separate itself from tradition and inclination, it would be entirely empty and incapable of deciding any question in theory or in practice. From this, the Pyrrhonians concluded that no one should make any claim about the nature of reality and that everyone should live pragmatically according to mere appearance and feeling.

The Pyrrhonian critique of philosophy was revived 2,000 years later by David Hume, who drew a quite different conclusion. He argued that the desire to understand what is ultimate-

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ly real is as firmly implanted in human nature as the instinct to breathe and, thus, cannot be abandoned. But he agreed with the Pyrrhonians that philosophical autonomy independent of tradition is vacuous. From this he concluded, however, not that we should abandon philosophy but that we should reform it. Philosophers must openly acknowledge the dependence of their reason on custom and tradition. Tradition and custom are not barriers to understanding reality that must be transcended but the only medium through which to apprehend it. The medium is partly opaque, often incoherent and incomplete, and is thus open to criticism—but only by one who is a loyal and skillful participant in it. "Philosophical decisions," Hume said, "are nothing but reflections of common life methodized and corrected."

Hume's insight was a rediscovery of one first reached by St. Augustine, who was himself, at one time, a skeptic. We may imagine Augustine thinking: If reason is tradition-laden, then the first question of rationality is, *To which tradition of inquiry shall I give my allegiance?* And this, Augustine discovered, is not a question of pagan rational autonomy but of the *will*. In converting from philosophic skepticism to Christianity, Augustine gave his allegiance to sacred biblical tradition as the source of a reformed philosophic rationality, a move expressed in his maxim "*Credo ut intelligam*" ("I believe in order to understand"), which contradicts the maxim of Greek philosophy—that one should not believe *until* one understands. In uniting biblical tradition with pagan Greek philosophy, Augustine forged a new form of speculative inquiry more powerful than either by itself. It would become institutionalized in the medieval universities; guide the great speculative systems of Aquinas, Ockham, and Scotus; and remain the dominant form of rationality in Christian civilization until the 16th century, when pagan philosophical autonomy would suddenly reappear, shattering Christendom and itself into a thousand fragments.

What we call "the Enlightenment" was not a bright idea of 17th-century Europeans but a reenactment of the hubris of pagan philosophical autonomy, which had maintained much of its freedom within the constraints of Christian tradition. Christians were taught to think for themselves. Aquinas's dialectical method required constructing powerful arguments *against* Christian beliefs and refuting them. The most powerful arguments for atheism ever produced were made by 17th-century French Jesuits. And it should not be surprising that some would be more convinced by the arguments for atheism than by the Jesuits' refutation. Having been vigorously exercised for centuries within Christendom, philosophy grew strong, eventually recovered its pagan disposition, and finally rebelled against its Augustinian role as the handmaid of theology.

The radical transcendence demanded by philosophical autonomy requires the total destruction *in thought* of all traditional authority. Descartes, the "father of modern philosophy," speaking of the attitude of philosophical reason toward traditional order, says: "I know no better remedy than absolutely to raze it to the ground, in order to raise a new one in its stead." This revival of pagan philosophical autonomy would gradually filter down to the populace, so that, a century and a half later, a member of the National Assembly, during the French Revolution, could, as a matter of course, invoke Descartes' language of total destruction leading to a totally new creation.

> All the establishments in France crown the unhappiness of the people: to make them happy they must be renewed, their ideas, their laws, their customs must be changed; . . . men changed, things changed . . . destroy everything; yes destroy everything; then everything is to be renewed.

And the French Revolution tried to do just that.

The same rejection of reform in favor of total criticism, total destruction, and total renewal continued in later revolutionary thinkers inspired by the French Revolution. Marx wrote in the 1840's: "We are not interested in a change in private property but only in its annihilation, not in conciliation of class antagonisms but in the abolition of classes, not in reforms of present society but in the foundation of a new one." About the same time, Proudhon declared: "I destroy in order to build." And Bakunin proclaimed, "[T]he joy of destruction is a creative joy."

The philosophical intellect—unless humbled by the reforms required by St. Augustine and Hume—is not interested in reforming the condition of man but only in world inversions and the dominion they make possible. This is the very nature of philosophical thought, because the thinker seeks nothing less than an ultimate grasp of the topic at hand. Given man's limited experience, however, he can achieve this only by taking a *part* of experience and magically transforming it into the whole. For example, the first philosopher, Thales, held that everything is really made of water. Similarly, Marx taught that all history is the story of class struggle: Proudhon, that property is theft; Locke, that no government is legitimate unless founded on a contract; Rousseau, that man is born free but everywhere is in chains. This is philosophical alchemy, and it is as destructive as the sad gift of King Midas, who was endowed with the power to transform everything he touched into gold.

Rousseau, whose philosophy haunted the halls of the French Revolutionary assemblies, was masterful at exploiting the world inversions that are characteristic of philosophical hubris. Burke left us an account of what Hume told him about Rousseau's method of writing. The public, Rousseau observed, is naturally drawn to tales of the miraculous, but modern thinkers have lost belief in the gods and in fairies and magicians. Rousseau thought, however, that the marvelous could still be effected by *philosophical* paradoxes discerned in "life, in manners, in characters, and in extraordinary situations, giving rise to new and unlooked-for strokes in politics and morals." Hume, who knew Rousseau personally, described him as a "Prodigy of Pride and Ferocity" whose whole life "is to be regarded as one continu'd Lye and imposture." Of his writings, he said that their "general Tendency is surely rather to do hurt than Service to Mankind."

Hume held that the first philosophers were atheists, by which he meant that philosophical autonomy can accept no authority outside itself. When Thales taught that all is made of water, he included the gods. The great 20th-century metaphysician Alfred North Whitehead argued that God cannot be an exception to the metaphysical categories. In short, philosophy cannot be guided—without ceasing to be philosophy—by any revelation from the Divine. If our concept of God is to be shaped exclusively by the philosopher's own self-certifying reason, however, then that is only a step away from saying that the philosopher is God. Aristotle taught that God's activity is "thought thinking thought" and, in so doing, conceived of God as a pagan philosopher. It would be left to Hegel to make explicit the atheism intimated in philosophy and to teach that, in his own philosophy, the Divine had achieved self-knowledge. Contemporary American philosopher Richard Rorty has claimed that, in a truly "enlightened" liberal society, "no trace of Divinity" would remain.

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Cicero said Socrates brought philosophy down from the heavens and placed it in cities and homes. It is also true, however, that pagan civil magistrates put Socrates to death for impiety. Philosophy was tolerated in the ancient world but only in small, private sects on the margins of society. In Christendom, however, philosophy had been united with biblical tradition in a speculative form of thought known as *theology*. Since every Christian was, to a degree, a theologian, every Christian had the potential to philosophize. The medieval Church had educated the masses, and the Protestant Church had taught them to read. When pagan philosophy broke free of her theological stepparent, there were many in Christendom who greeted her as one with whom they had been—in some way—long familiar.

For the first time in history, this made mass secular philosophical movements possible. Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* was the first philosophical best-seller, peddling Hobbesianism to the people. At about the same time, the French *philosophe* Diderot called for raising the philosophical consciousness of the masses: "Let us hasten to make philosophy popular. If we want the philosophers to march on before, let us approach the people at the point where the philosophers are." And, in the 1840's, Marx could write to Ruge: "Philosophy has become secularized, and the striking proof thereof is that the philosophical consciousness itself has been pulled into the torment of struggle. . . . What we must accomplish is the ruthless criticism of all that exists."

Hume contemptuously described his own time as "this philosophic age." A lifelong student of the destructive power of philosophic errors, he did not think this a good thing. Louis-Sebastien Mercier, however, who wrote a utopian novel, *The Year 2440*, anticipating the French Revolution, thought the opposite: "The flame of philosophy . . . has been lit and dominates Europe: the wind of despotism in curbing the flame can only stir it up and billow it into larger and brighter bursts." As the power of the state increased through ever-expanding centralization, industrialization, and technology, the ancient philosophic passion to dominion would be enflamed. With the French Revolution, Plato's fantasy that philosophers should be kings would become a political possibility. Later, Marxists philosopher-kings would actually rule Russia and other places.

The foundation for the enduring political legacy of the *philosophes* was laid by Gracchus Babeuf's "Conspiracy of the Equals." Babeuf was the first professional revolutionary. Anticipating Lenin, he built up a system of cells and networks of communication designed not only to overthrow a regime but to transform society. He concluded that the French Revolution had failed because the *philosophes* were not entirely emancipated from traditional society. Mankind needed a second and final revolution as well as an entirely new kind of human being to create and manage it. Babeuf's associate Sylvain Marechal wrote the first revolutionary manifesto, "The Manifesto of the Equals." Another associate, Fillipo Buonarroti, wrote *A History of Babeuf's Conspiracy*, which, after 1830, became the bible of professional revolutionaries throughout Europe and Latin America. Marx called this movement "the revolution in permanence." The revolution, he says, is "not against any wrong in particular but against wrong in general." Babeuf asserted the same at his trial. The revolution was meant to be the end of all "fences, hedges, walls, doorlocks, disputes, lawsuits, thefts, murders, of all crimes, of law-courts, prisons, gallows, pains, despairs, . . . of envy, jealousy, . . . and finally of all vices." Such a mind entranced by the seamless whole of the philosophic act would have no obligation to the system of total evil surrounding him. Any act of terror would justify the final solution. Babeuf's followers were instructed to

> Kill the five, the seven ministers, the General of the Interior and his general staff, occupy the halls of the Five Hundred and of the Ancients, seize everyone who presents himself there, put to death every public official who exercises his functions, every foreigner who does not submit himself to provisional arrest, every citizen who, after a rigorous search of his house, is still found having flour, vegetables and other edibles he has not declared, every wine merchant who does not distribute his merchandise; hang on the first lamp post every baker who does not bake; persecute with fire and sword anyone who offers resistance.

Ordinary crime is directed at particular objects, leaving the rest of traditional society intact. Philosophic crime is an act within an inverted world in which standards of truth and morality undergo the transformation of philosophical alchemy. Such crime always presents itself as liberation and professes its innocence.

From the French Revolution—through total wars, totalitarian revolutions, and totalitarian power—to the end of the Cold War, the world has suffered at the hands of philosophic crime and murder. Many think that the Revolution has exhausted itself and that we are entering a postideological age. Such thinking betrays a failure to understand our condition. What Marx called the "revolution in permanence" may no longer resort to violence, but world inversion and philosophical alchemy will *necessarily* continue as an essential part of a philosophically shaped culture. Antonio Gramsci understood this and argued that Marxists should abandon violence for a "long march through the institutions." Traditional society can be subverted by controlling the institutions that shape culture. This strategy has, in 40 years, succeeded in transforming America from a Christian-European culture into what can only be described as a kind of neo-Gramscian liberalism. Our public leaders no longer describe America as a particular cultural inheritance built by peoples with historic identities but as a *philosophical* idea. To be an American is simply to subscribe—in the manner of the *philosophes*—to abstract propositions about equality and liberty.

In Hume's "philosophic age," everything touched by the philosophic act is transmuted into a superstition. Even simple social changes are viewed in the light of world inversions. Moral and political language enter the topsy-turvy world of the philosophic act. Murderers are transformed into judges. Innocence is called upon to defend itself. The privileged exact the revenge of victims, and public discourse collapses into what Vico called "the barbarism of reflection."

The first philosophic age is too recent to be well understood, and few even recognize its existence. Our education has not prepared us to recognize the seductive character of the philosophic act, its peculiar errors, and the distinction between a corrupt and a true form of philosophic understanding. David Hume was the first to work out a systematic critique of philosophy's relation to society. Yet he began his career seduced by a belief in philosophy's primordial innocence. As a young man, he wrote: "Generally speaking the errors of religion are dangerous, those of philosophy merely ridiculous"—a judgment he would, in time, come to question. In the first philosophic age, the errors of philosophy are dangerous; those of religion, merely ridiculous. c

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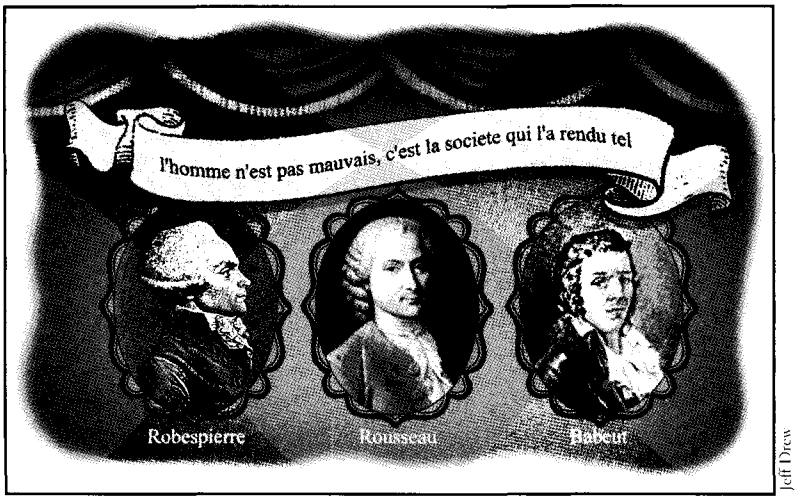
The French Revolution in Three Acts

The Rise of the Totalitarian State

by Claude Polin



Jeff Drew

Taken as a whole, the French Revolution, like any other historical event, may be understood in many ways. Excluding material or circumstantial causes, I see it as a sort of drama, each act of which is performed by characters—sometimes the same, sometimes different—who all, driven by some idea, strive to achieve a certain goal that gives meaning to their actions. I do not believe in the theory that men's thoughts and actions determine their living conditions, for the very simple reason that no living condition is really unbearable to a man before he decides it is. There lies the difference between man and animal. Which is to say that the French Revolution and its course of events stem very simply from what men purported to do and persuaded others to do, even if, in the process, they fell victim to unforeseen consequences, including the logical outcome of their own ideas, to which they happened to be blind. The French Revolution is a rare example of ideas being put to work, forcing their own followers to fall prey to their inner and progressively revealed logic. Thus, the best historian of the French Revolution must also be a philosopher.

To put it in a nutshell, the French Revolution may be viewed as a lesson on the power of one of the most common of human vices: vanity, or the desire for social recognition—provided it is understood that lust for social standing is inversely proportionate to the love of those principles and ideas that are the true props of self-esteem. Men moved by vanity are vain and insecure, not proud.

First, there was the vanity of the upper-middle class, offended not to have achieved the recognition of the upper class: The former wished merely to join the club, to be *gentlemen*.

That triggered the vanity of the lower-middle class, a much greater mass of people, engaged in social change on an entirely different scale. These men wanted to be citizens, which meant members of the new sovereign. In other words, they wanted to be *kings*.

And, finally, the vanity of the lowest classes began to be heard, and particularly that of the misfits, who could not bear to have any class of men above them. In fact, they objected to the very existence of anyone who could be considered living proof that they were imperfect beings: They wanted to be *gods*.

Even though the Revolution was a rather bloody mess from the outset—people actually ate the still-warm heart of Monsieur de Launay, *gouverneur de la Bastille*, not-so-deftly carved out by an apprentice butcher—it was, nonetheless, imagined, in the minds of its first leaders, to be a "glorious revolution" in its own right, since, at that early stage, everything could be explained by the fact that a certain number of men felt excluded from the political processes and thought they deserved better. First among them was not so much the rising mass of people involved in the economic modernization of France that Marx will call the *bourgeois* but mostly people seeking social recognition and a share of political power: I mean the judiciary, Montesquieu being one of their prominent figures. Those people were not after money; they had plenty. They just thought that, within the fabric of French society, they had been dealt an unfair hand. They dreamt of a country in which, war being an absurd and vain policy, what was crucial was the law, the due process of law, the law state, and its guardians, rather than men bearing swords. They dreamt of a constitutional state in which the constitution and the laws derived from it would be the new gods, and the judges would be the new priests. They did not want to kill anyone—still less the king himself. They wished for a constitutional monarchy, and their wish was, at first, fulfilled. (It was to take 26 years for it to become a permanent reality.)

In order to create this state, they had to combat the sanctity of the previous monarchy and to unleash a spirit they secretly

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dreaded but had to enlist openly to win the day: the spirit of democracy, the claim that power belongs to the people at large. They needed it, for traditional society had no special political role for them. But they wanted to put it back in its bottle as soon as it had succeeded in jolting the powers of yesterday into allowing them to participate. They wanted to enter the restricted club, not to open its doors to anybody and everybody. Later, they received some reinforcement from all the people who had taken a good bite out of the *biens nationaux* and who would have been quite satisfied to let the Revolution rest at that. That is why they went so far as to invent two classes of citizens, dubbed, respectively, "active" and "passive": Nobody but the propertied could vote or be elected. Such was, then, the first act of the play. It lasted as long as its leading character, its star, the *moderate*, managed to survive. Blood was shed, but on the backstage, so that the moderate could ignore this less-palatable ingredient of the proposed meal. For three years, until the summer of 1792, the moderate was the hero.

Alas for him, the king, a man redeemed by his death but not much else, got into his head the half-baked idea of fleeing. He managed it so clumsily that he not only lost whatever hold he still had on the situation, but, killing two birds with the same stone, he also deprived the moderate of any chance to persuade the spirit to return to its bottle (if ever there had been any chance it would). With the monarchy now disqualified, the spirit of democracy was once and for all set free. Thus began the second act of the play, in which the leading role was to be performed by Rousseau and his disciples.

What happened was something that I daresay is rather preposterous to any pragmatic, realistic mind not dedicated to abstract rationalism. *What is democracy?* asks Rousseau. His answer: *The sovereign government of the people by the people. But how are the people to be sovereign*? Rousseau responds with frightening and impeccable logic: *The people are sovereign when each person declared qualified to be a member of the people is himself sovereign*. And there is the rub. Logically, the sovereignty of every citizen must be compatible with the sovereignty of every other one. Now, there are not many ways to achieve that: The less every individual thinks of himself as different from others—as somebody with his own tastes, his own interests, his own attachments, his own home, his own family, and so forth—the more he will discard all that is irrelevant but incompatible with his duties as a citizen. The less he is tempted to put this sovereignty to his own use, the less the sovereignty of his own will shall conflict with the sovereignty of others and, therefore, the more everyone will act as a single will. Then, and only then, will all be sovereign together and at the same time. Then will democracy be real. In other words, to be a good citizen, you have to stop being what you are by nature, or, to use the catchword of the time, you have to be virtuous.

Hence, there exists a governing political principle, the grassroot of any particular policy you can conceive of, and, naturally, the one that should be implemented first and foremost, which runs something like this: Forget whatever makes you a particular individual; give up your own self; become selfless; learn to hate whatever pertains to your particular individuality. These are precisely the rules the disciples of Rousseau proceeded to enforce. In a most memorable and truly metaphysical speech at the Convention, Robespierre declared war on the "*abjection du moi*" (abjection of egoism) and proclaimed as patriots and true citizens only those who succeeded in caricaturing the age-old ideal of self-abnegation by becoming monks whose god was the Nation.

The process was bound to derail into sheer madness: Anybody yielding to his natural proclivities could be suspected of being a lukewarm patriot. Terror was the natural outcome of this unrelenting hunt for purity. And, it must be added, traditional French Christian culture contributed to this witch hunt. For centuries—it could be traced back to the Greek philosophers—it had been ignoble to deal with money, to be involved in banking or trade. Whatever the reasons (and some were quite respectable), it is quite clear those prejudices kindled animosity toward men engaged in lucrative activities, such as merchants and industrialists. How could they be anything but "*accapareurs*" (sharks), sheer "*monopolistes*" (monopolizers), prepared to starve the people to death to promote their own selfish interests to the detriment of the supreme, sacred glory of the country itself? Radical democracy turned against liberal democracy: Money, as Rousseau put it, was a "*mot d'esclave*" (a slave's language, that of a person willing to sell himself). And beyond hostility to entrepreneurs lurked the irresistible feeling that inequality was the worst enemy of democracy: No hierarchy of any kind was admissible among citizens. What a perfect opportunity for envy—this secular and all-too-human passion—to satisfy its boundless greed! Terror was needed to save the country, to save the Revolution, to save democracy. It had to be made law—and that is precisely what Robespierre did. Who could have denied its legitimacy, who could have stopped the fateful escalation? Whatever might be required in the way of self-sacrifice and elimination of traitors had to be just and good, because there was nothing in which you differed from your neighbor from which an undue love of yourself could not stem. And, to be a good citizen, you had to submit to this sacrifice, which, all in all, had to be of your own doing rather than that of any possible tyrant! Was it not the duty of a good citizen to seek out traitors and to start by investigating himself?

Nonetheless, whatever the terrorists of '93 may have done—and they did resort to mass murder—their terror was of a different order from the terror brought on by our totalitarian 20th century, such as it is described, for instance, by Solzhenitsyn. The self-proclaimed patriots of '93 were disciples of Rousseau. They wanted to engender a new man, the perfect citizen. To achieve that, each person had to purify himself of the new sin: his private interest. This was seemingly feasible: Was not Robespierre claiming to be incorruptible? And, of course, being only human, it was all too tempting for each of them, while trying to eradicate that sin from himself, to point his finger at the same sin in others, thereby begetting and abetting widespread terror. The extremes to which they carried this all-too-human policy, however, should not conceal a decisive fact: There was a reward for self-sacrifice, self-purification—a tremendous one. Indeed, by trying to be a good citizen, everyone was also (and, I think, mainly) trying to be what a good citizen deserves to be: a member of the body of citizens, a sovereign in his own right. And this did not exclude others from achieving the same status. Henceforth, even though every good citizen may have felt obligated to expose bad ones, he had no *vital* interest in doing so: He had attained his primary ambition, his revenge, which was to "become somebody" (as l'abbé de Sieyes so aptly put it as early as 1789). Henceforth, he no longer belonged to a subordinate, inferior class of society (the Third Estate or common people). The lowest dreg of society had now become a king in his own right, and, to be a king, he did not *necessarily* need everyone else

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to bow down to him (although, once again, lots and lots of unpatriotic heads had to fall before attaining that state of democratic bliss). The whole process triggered a civil war, but one for which you might anticipate a happy ending: a society of fraternal kings.

And that is why appearances are misleading: We merely seem to have reached ultimate perfection in tyranny, the first draft of a totalitarian society. Actually, the blood already shed should not blind us. There was more to come; there was another step to be taken before attaining our grandiose gulags; and it is only this latter step that begins to sound totalitarian.

The third act of the play was written by Gracchus Babeuf. It was not written in blood (except his own) but remained a sort of blueprint of things to come. As for the facts, the French obviously wearied of civil war, and, even though it continued more discreetly until the Consulat, its most spectacular momentum was spent when they beheaded Robespierre in July 1794. But Babeuf, somehow ahead of his time, picked up the trail left by Robespierre and went to work.

What were his inspirers really after? They were intent on making the perfect citizen, and, while thinking it could be done, they were still reasoning along the old line, the classical Greek and Christian one: There is an evil side to men, and, even though you could expose it in others, you could not help assuming you had your own (which was probably why you had to point it out in others before they indentified it in you). No matter how much you considered others evil (*mauvais patriot*), you still had to strive not to be evil yourself, you still had to work to erase your own evil streak (your own egoism). And you were, first and foremost, the one in whose heart evil and sin were embedded.

But these inspirers were not Christians. They hated Christian philosophy. There was an inner and sinister momentum to their ideas, and it was unleashed by Babeuf. This is the way his mind worked. Being a man of the same mold as Anacharsis Cloots, who proclaimed himself "*l'ennemi personnel de Dieu*," Babeuf could find no explanation for the presence of any kind of evil in man. In this way, he was even truer to Rousseau than Robespierre had ever been. The latter had adhered to Rousseau's belief that, to engender a perfect society, you had to "*renaturer l'homme*" (recover the equivalent of what man was by nature)—with his own help, if possible. Babeuf, apparently a good father and a good husband, followed another of Rousseau's suggestions: Why should I be evil? What sort of crime have I committed, being only what Nature tells me to be? Why could it not be society itself that makes man evil? As the famous saying goes: *l'homme n'est pas mauvais, c'est la société qui l'a rendu tel?* (Man is not bad, it is society that makes him so.) Babeuf had thus discovered a new clue: If I am perfect by nature (as Rousseau said), and yet my behavior is not perfect, or, even more important, if I am not happy, not pleased with what I am or the way life goes, there can be only one reason: *Others are responsible, not me*. Others must be responsible not only for my country's plights but for mine, for my wife's, for my children's miseries. Therefore, others must be evil, not me, a total reversal of the traditional culture of Europe.

Now you had to answer the question: which others? Who are to be the evil ones? Again, simple logic prevailed. Since my sinlessness allows me to think however I please without ever feeling guilty, it is obvious that *anybody* who comes my way may be deemed evil. After all, had not Rousseau himself claimed that the most natural and, therefore, universal passion of mankind was for each individual to *love himself* first, and, of course, more than any other person? Was not Rousseau implying that nobody cares for me? Of course, we could argue that this feeling is entirely reversible, but what does that lead to, if not to the idea (back to the horrible Mr. Hobbes!) that society is nothing but a war of everyone against everyone else, or, conversely, that paradise for men was a place where each could live in perfect solitude? So the enemy could not remain only the rich, the powerful, the ones demanding obedience as men of God, *etc*. Everybody was a potential enemy, or could be suspected of being so, simply because nobody cared for anybody and everybody was different from anybody else.

And then comes the crowning element. The most immediately threatening people must obviously be the ones who had the ability to do anything better, faster, more effectively than you, or simply to *do* it, whereas you could not. What was to be done with these people? Babeuf is clear about implementing the final solution. "*Si un bucheron*," he says, "*peut abattre tout seul un arbre en cinq minutes, alors qu'il faut une demie-heure à cinq autres pour le faire, il faut poursuivre cet homme comme un fléau public et l'empêcher de nuire.*" ("If a lumberjack can fell a tree single-handed in five minutes, while it takes five others half an hour to do so, this man must be pursued as a public danger and prevented from doing harm.") From there, it was a short jump indeed to thinking there was nothing more intolerable to an individual than the most minute difference between himself and others. And it was an even shorter jump to considering that your self-esteem was directly proportionate to your ability to prevent anybody from being anything you yourself could not be. The final outcome can be safely guessed: You end up satisfied with what you are to the extent that you see nobody who is not so much superior as simply different from yourself. And that was the program of the "*Conspiration des Egaux.*"

What Babeuf had in mind was not implemented. People must have grown tired of living in constant terror of the outcome—particularly the mass of propertied people, longing for the restoration of law and order. Having attempted to assassinate Napoleon Bonaparte, Babeuf was arrested and beheaded. Babeuf's time, however, was to come—the time when everyone would fear everyone else and would try to suppress that fear by suppressing others, when you could survive only at the expense of someone else's life, when your survival (a potato) could be bought only with the promise of starving someone else, when every man would become a wolf to every other, and the only pleasure to be derived from any social relationship would be that no one could feel safe enjoying anything you could not enjoy yourself. And that is what totalitarian democracy, communism, is about at its core.

For this society to come into being, for these feelings and this behavior to spread to masses of people, something else that did not fully exist at the time of Babeuf was required. For communism to sprout, a special relationship among men had to become absolutely standard, most common, most typical of the society in which they lived. This relationship is one into which a person is forced to enter and keep entering with someone else, even though he feels continually cheated by the other party, which means that party is totally indifferent to equity or fairness and that he ruthlessly uses whatever strengths he has to take advantage of whomever he is dealing with, while the latter is in a position of both weakness and inability to sever the relationship. If men in a given society maintain this relationship to one an-

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other, they will soon be divided into actively warring enemies. And the losers (or the ones considering themselves losers) will be convinced that the happiness of others is directly responsible for their own misery and, therefore, will be fiercely intent on shaking the hold of their exploiters, depriving them of any means to perform their unjust and hateful tricks, reducing them to such a state that they will be on the same footing as their victims, and eventually changing the fabric of society altogether.

This is exactly how Marx envisioned the society that was slowly emerging before his eyes from the ashes of the *ancien régime*: a society of division of labor, in which everyone depends on everyone else but in which some people have managed to force others to work in such a way that they have to do it on their exploiters' terms. So he started considering a way to change the situation radically. The revolt of the proletarians against the bourgeois was supposed to achieve that goal and build a classless society. What Marx did not foresee were the inner dynamics of the idea. Once you start thinking that, for any exchange between men to take place on fair terms, they have to be on absolutely equal footing, you have stepped onto an extremely slippery slope. At the bottom, being faced with the possibility of gaining through the exchange with others, everybody prefers to get nothing—provided the others do not get anything either—rather than see anyone gaining more. This is exactly what happened when the classless society started to remain classless only because people were so poor that they had to fight one another all day, every day, just to survive, their only glimmer of hope being the thought that all the others were as miserable as they were. And that is true totalitarianism, a society in which everyone finds an interest in controlling everyone else. ·c·

Harvesters Resting

—1853—

after the painting by J.-F. Millet (1814-75)

by David Middleton

The pink and golden graindust spreads its mist
Glittering over the reapers' spare noon meal—
Water from red-brown pots of earthenware,
Mush that crude spoons scoop from a single bowl.

And while they sit or sprawl by wheat stacks swelled
Like many-breasted Cybele, one stands,
The scythers' overseer, whose arms link them
And a gleaner-girl come shy in Virgin-blue.

The tale is Ruth and Boaz now transposed
From Bethlehem to France's central plain
With Boaz no rich kinsman but the same
As these he works for absent heirs abroad.

Though foreign, Ruth will find a husband here
And bear the common realm inside her womb,
A Moabite at home in Israel,
Ancestress and descendent of its kings.

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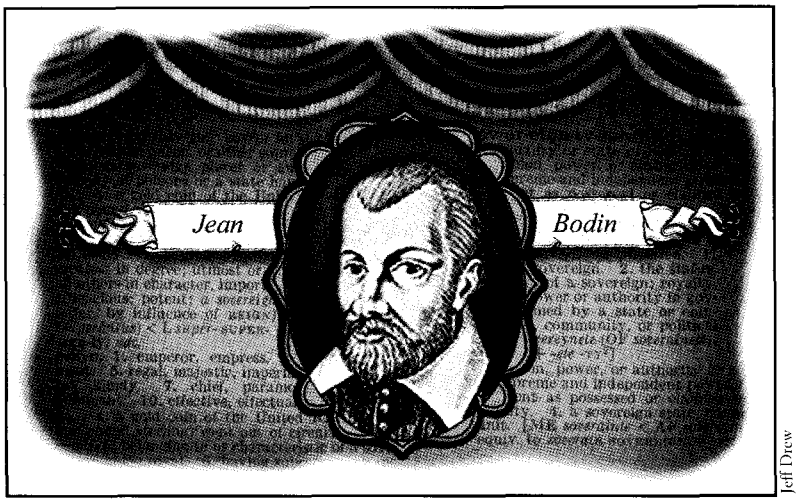
The Modern Conception of Sovereignty

A Jacobin Invention

by Alain de Benoist



Jeff Drew

The question of sovereignty reappeared at the end of the Middle Ages, when many began to ask not only what is the best possible form of government, or what should be the purpose of the authority held by political power, but what is the political bond that unites a people to its government? That is to say, how ought we to define, within a political community, the connection between those who govern and those who are governed?

This is the question that Jean Bodin attempted to address in his famous book, *La République* (*The Commonwealth*), which appeared in 1576. Bodin did not invent sovereignty, but he was the first to make a conceptual analysis and to propose a systematic formulation. The starting point for this exercise was not an observation of the facts but a two-fold aspiration: first, Bodin's desire for a restoration of the social order, which had been turned upside down by the religious wars, and second, the demand, on the part of the kings of France, for emancipation from every form of allegiance to the emperor and the pope. Bodin's treatment of sovereignty would quite naturally constitute the ideology of the territorial kingdoms, then in their infancy, which sought to emancipate themselves from the tutelage of the Holy Roman Empire, while consolidating the transformation of power that resulted from the king's success in dominating his feudal nobility.

Bodin begins by recalling, quite correctly, that sovereignty (or *majestas*), which he makes the cornerstone of his entire system, is an attribute of the power to command, which itself constitutes one of the givens of politics. Like most authors of his time, he also declares that a government is only strong if it is legitimate, and he underscores his conviction that a government action must conform to a certain number of values determined by justice and reason. He is well aware, however, that such considerations are not enough to account for the notion of sovereign power. For that reason, he declares that the source of power derives from the law. The capacity for making and breaking the laws belongs to the sovereign. That is what constitutes the hallmark of sovereignty: The power to legislate and the power to govern are identical. The conclusion that Bodin deduces from this is radical: Since he cannot be subjected to the decisions that he makes or to the decrees he issues, the prince is necessarily above the law.

This is the formula that had appeared among Roman legal experts: *princeps solutus est legibus*. "Those who are sovereign," writes Bodin, "must not be in any way subject to the commands of others. . . . That is why the law says that the prince is absolved from the power of the laws. . . . The laws of the prince depend only on his pure free will." The prince, therefore, possesses the sovereign power to impose laws that are not binding on himself, and, to exercise this power, he has no need of the consent of his subjects—which means that sovereignty is totally independent of the subjects on which it imposes the law. Cardinal Richelieu would later say, in the same spirit, that "the prince is master of legal formalities."

By this reason of its legislative power, continues Bodin, the supreme authority is and can only be unique and absolute, whence his definition of sovereignty as the "absolute and perpetual power of a commonwealth"—that is to say, as an unlimited power in the order of human affairs. The absolute power of sovereignty lies in the fact that the sovereign is not subject to his own laws but issues and abrogates them as he likes. On the other hand, the ability to make laws requires that sovereignty be absolute, because the legislative power cannot be shared. All the rest of the sovereign's political prerogatives stem from this initial affirmation. Bodin deduces from this that the fundamental characteristic of sovereignty is that it confers on the prince, who is subject to no rule beyond his own will, the power not to be

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bound or dependent on anyone, his power being neither delegated, nor temporary, nor responsible to anyone whatsoever. In fact, if he were to set about depending on someone other than himself, whether domestic or foreign, he would no longer have the power to legislate. He would no longer be sovereign.

> The revolutionary conception of sovereignty makes nationality and citizenship synonymous.

Boudin's sovereignty is therefore completely exclusive: In assigning to the king the role of unique legislator, it confers on the state an unlimited power to act. As a result, a sovereign state is defined as a state whose ruler depends on no one other than himself. This implies that the nation is constituted as a state, and even that it is identical with the state. For Bodin, a country may exist by reason of its history, its culture, its identity, or its customs, but it does not exist politically except to the extent that it is constituted as a sovereign state. Sovereignty is then the absolute power that makes a commonwealth a political entity, itself unique and absolute. The state must be one and indivisible, since it is nothing other than an expression of the legislative monopoly held by the sovereign. Local autonomies can only be admitted to the extent that they do not constrain the prince's authority. In fact, these autonomies will never cease to be ever more constrained. The state thus becomes a monad, while the prince finds himself divided from the people—which to say, placed into an isolation that borders on solipsism.

The significance of this new theory is evident. On the one hand, it dissociates civil society and political society, a dissociation that political thought will make great use of at the beginning of the 18th century. On the other hand, it lays the foundation of the modern nation-state, which is characterized by the indivisible nature of its absolute power. With Bodin, political theory enters, with both feet, into modernity.

According to Bodin, sovereignty is above all inseparable from the idea of a political society; it abolishes particular connections and loyalties and sets itself up on the ruins of concrete communities. Implicitly, the social bond has already turned into a governmental contract, in which only individuals are involved, eliminating any mediation between members of society and the power of government. This severing of the connections between prepolitical communities and the political unit will be brought about, first, by absolute monarchy, and then by the nation-state, which defines itself above all by its homogeneous character, whether that homogeneity is natural (that is, cultural or ethnic) or acquired (by relegating all collective differences to the sphere of private life).

It is not difficult to see the religious underpinnings of this doctrine: The way in which Bodin conceives of political power is only a profane transposition of the absolutist way in which God exercises His own power—and the way in which the pope rules over Christianity. This is true even though he rejects the medieval conception of power as a simple delegation of God's authority. With Bodin, the prince is no longer content to hold power by "divine right." By giving himself the power to make and unmake laws, he is acting in the manner of God. He constitutes, by himself, a separate whole, which dominates the social whole as God dominates the cosmos. The same goes for the absolute rectitude of the sovereign, which simply translates into the political realm the attributes of the Cartesian god, who can do all that he wills but cannot will that which is evil.

From sovereignty, it is a small, surreptitious step to the notion of infallibility. In other words, Bodin desacralizes sovereignty by taking it away from God, but he resacralizes it immediately in a profane form: He leaves the monopolistic and absolute sovereignty of God in order to end up with the monopolistic and absolute power of the state. All modernity, then in its infancy, resides in this ambiguity: On the one hand, political power is becoming secular; on the other, the sovereign—henceforth identical with the state—is becoming a person endowed with an almost divine political power. This is a perfect illustration of Carl Schmitt's thesis that "all the pregnant concepts of the modern theory of the state are theological concepts that have been secularized."

Bodin's theory of sovereignty, however, does not imply any particular type of regime. He prefers monarchy, because power is naturally more concentrated in a monarchy, but he understands it as equally compatible with the power of an aristocracy or with democracy, though the risk of dividing power is greater in a democracy.

There is something paradoxical in this modern formulation of sovereignty. Bodin takes pains to distinguish tyrannical power from sovereign power but only by appealing to ideas that, objectively speaking, constitute a limitation on sovereignty, even though he defines it as indivisible and absolute. This limitation might reside in the prince's need to respect certain natural and divine laws. It might also reside in the ultimate purpose of power, which is to serve the common good without injuring the rights of the members of society; it might even reside in the criteria for its legitimate exercise. This entirely theoretical bulwark against tyranny will quickly fail, by reason of the very dynamic of absolutism.

The conception of sovereignty that was characteristic of absolute monarchy was preserved in its entirety by the French Revolution, which confined itself to ascribing such power to the nation. From this comes the difficulty that the republic came up against when it tried to reconcile the first two articles of the *Declaration of the Rights of Men*, which declare the primacy of the individual's universal rights, with the third article, which makes the nation the sole authority to judge its own competence.

One of the merits of a recent book by Ladan Boroumand is to have established, on the basis of a careful examination of texts, not only the continuity of the idea of absolute sovereignty from the *ancien régime* to the Revolution but that the revolutionary affirmation of the primacy of national sovereignty does not date from 1792 or 1793—during the rise to power of the Jacobin Party—but to the very beginning of the movement. The key moment is reached when the Third Estate makes its unilateral decision, in May 1789, to undertake the process of verifying the deputies' credentials, a decision that launches the transformation of the Estates-General into the National Assembly and endows the deputies with political sovereignty.

The motion proffered by the Abbé de Siéyès, which invites the communes to proclaim themselves a "National Assembly,"

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was opposed by Mirabeau's motion, which puts forward the alternative name, "Assembly of the People's Representatives." The rivalry between the two motions uncovers a revealing difficulty in the attempt to define the nation. At the end of the day, Siéyès' motion will carry, while Mirabeau's will be rejected as injurious to the nation's right. For Siéyès, however, the nation is "a living body of associates under a common law," a body that is rigorously homogeneous in its essence and detached from every prepolitical purpose. It is to this body, and to it alone, that sovereignty must be granted. "The nation exists before all, it is the origin of all. Its will is always legal, it is a law unto itself."

On June 17, 1789, Siéyès gets the name "National Assembly' adopted, with the slogan that the representation of the nation can only be "one and indivisible." Since the General Will is regarded as taking shape only within the legislative body, national representation is confused with the nation. From that instant, sovereignty becomes the property of the nation, and the sovereignty transferred to the Assembly is to be exercised from on high. Henceforth, the nation corresponds to the area of collective sovereignty that is incarnated in the National Assembly. Revolutionary sovereignty, therefore, does not come originally from the electoral body but represents a simple transfer from royal power.

The Constitution of 1791 goes still further, adding the qualification that "sovereignty is indivisible, inalienable, and indefeasible." However, in August 1791, in the course of the debate that preceded the final drafting of this article, a first draft submitted to the Assembly still attributed to sovereignty only the quality of indivisibility. *Inalienability* was added at the request of Robespierre. On September 7, Siéyès declares: "France must not be an assembly of little nations, which would govern themselves separately as democracies; it is not a collection of states; it is a unique whole, composed of integrating parts." By extension, on September 25, 1792, the French Republic is itself proclaimed "one and indivisible." Thus, intermediate bodies and basic forms of community life are denied any legitimacy of their own. A year later, the Jacobin denunciation of the "Federalist peril" will repeat this argument. Acting on the same principle, the revolutionaries will try to make regional dialects disappear, and then they will demand the suppression of the ancient provinces and their replacement with geometrically equal departments.

Parallel to this, the concept of *the people* receives a purely abstract definition, one that corresponds to the idea of the nation whose priority is immediately declared. This is the necessary condition for the people, in its turn, to be declared "sovereign." "If as an objective reality," writes Ladan Boroumand,

> the people could not be admitted into the sphere of the nation's sovereignty, the metaphysical entity *par excellence*, its metamorphosis into an ideal being gives it the right to participate in the logic of national sovereignty without endangering the transcendent existence of the nation, which is incarnate in [the political process of] representation.

Representation, however, is itself conceived as a principle of the unity and "indivisibility" of the people, thereby excluding the idea of a people formed out of particular communities and distinct entities. The idea of the nation, put forth as a unitary and transcendent being whose unity and indivisibility are necessarily independent of any external principle, ends up restoring the concept of the people to the point that the new idea replaces the old, inaugurating a tradition that French law has never ceased to perpetuate. Finally, the revolutionary conception of sovereignty makes nationality and citizenship synonymous: From then on, there will no longer be a French national who is not a French citizen (except when a citizen is stripped of civil rights), nor a citizen who is not a national. The people is all the more indivisible and unitary in that it has become a simple abstraction. This is why France, still today, is not a federal state and cannot recognize the existence of a Corsican or Breton people.

Thus, under the Revolution as under the *ancien régime*, the same conception of sovereignty as the "absolute and eternal power" of a republic is the source of all the rights and duties of the citizen. The sovereignty of the Jacobins allows no more restrictions than the sovereignty of Bodin. The revolutionaries denounce federalism in the same terms that absolute monarchy employed, when, for example, it reproached the Protestants for wanting to cantonize France on the model of Switzerland. They hurl anathemas and struggle against local particularisms in the same way that royal power tried by every means to reduce the autonomy of the feudal nobility. To legitimate revolutionary justice, they advance the same arguments that Cardinal Richelieu used in defending the discretionary power of the ruler. With the Revolution, national sovereignty is in opposition to royal absolutism, not because it rejects absolutism *per se*, but because it is transferring the absolute prerogatives of the king to the nation.

"Certainly," as Mona Ozouf has written,

> the men of the Revolution appear to break with the old world, by inventing a society of free and equal individuals. In reality, they have inherited from absolutism a concept that is much older and more constraining: the idea of national sovereignty, a transcendent mythic body that is in command of individuals. And this idea very quickly recovers its efficacy, and the absolute sovereignty of the nation comes to fill the place left vacant by the absolute sovereignty of the king. . . . The Terror itself, far from being a desperate measure dreamed up by a Republic on the point of collapse, follows logically from what they have borrowed from the Ancien Régime.

If, by all the evidence, it violates the natural rights of individuals, the Terror does not at all violate the rights of the nation, which, on the contrary, it intends to guarantee and preserve. "The similarities between absolutism and Jacobinism," writes Boroumand, "are easily explained. If the political reflexes and expedients are, before and after 1789, the same, it is from that fact that they are informed by the same principle: the sovereignty of the nation."

Thus, as Henri Mendras has observed,

> What was a claim in the 16th century, became in France an absolute doctrine, an intangible principle for the monarchy during two centuries, then for the constitutions since 1791. This principle was a juridical fiction, an abstraction that was incarnate in the king as absolute prince. With the king gone, the Republic picked up the baton.

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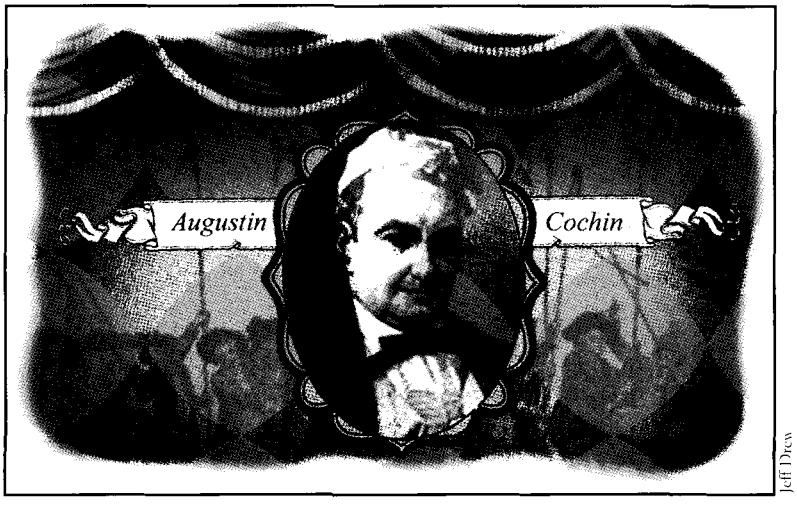
Augustin Cochin and the Revolutionary Process

by Bernard Dumont



Augustin Cochin, born in 1876, died prematurely—as did so many other French intellectuals of his generation—killed at the front in 1916. He did have enough time, however, to carry out between 1909 and 1914 a series of in-depth studies, the fruit of his archival research on the sequence of preparatory elections for the Estates-General in 1789, on the influence of the groups that were active in them, and, finally, on the organization of the Terror and the revolutionary government. The year before, Cochin had taken part in a debate that pitted the socialist historian Alphonse Aulard, at that time the principal defender of the triumphalist school of thought on the Revolution, and Hippolyte Taine, who had highlighted the revolution's misdeeds in his monumental *History of the Origins of Contemporary France*.

Certainly, Cochin was no socialist. Through his family, he was connected to the current of liberal Catholicism that accepted the new order that had resulted from the Revolution and limited its criticisms to the Revolution's excesses. He did not, therefore, belong to the counterrevolutionary school, which was opposed to the very principle of the Revolution and cultivated nostalgia for the *ancien régime*.

Cochin's rigorous, systematic approach to historiography inevitably led to his ostracism. For a long time, his name could not be invoked in support of an historical interpretation. Even today, his reputation as a Catholic counterrevolutionary continues to affect him, and those who have been forced to drag him from oblivion were initially attracted to Cochin by the violent criticisms made by the partisans of Republican history. Such was the case with François Furet, who virtually rehabilitated Cochin in his work *Interpreting the Revolution*, though Cochin has also won support from Regis Debray and the German Fred E. Schrader. Their work, however, has not prevented the partisans of the Revolution from repeating errors about Cochin. In a special number of *Historia*, for example, he is included (along with Abbé Barruel) among those who "attribute responsibility for the break to the secret agitations of the *philosophes* in their philosophical societies and Masonic lodges," and, more specifically, he is described as "privileging an elitist interpretation, that of an little group of managers acting in a clandestine manner."

Beginning with the centennial of the Revolution, a kind of history written in "defense of the republic" emerged. This style of history, later reinforced by Marxists, claims to see in the Revolution an inevitable collective phenomenon, whose subject is first and foremost the people. (Michelet, who was above all a romantic writer, is full of such accounts.) In this view, the revolutionary process became violent and, in some cases, uncontrollable because of the opposition it encountered and because of the obligation under which the revolutionaries labored—to defend the people against the coalition, exterior and interior, of its enemies. (The same argument would later be used to justify "war communism" and the Leninist terror.) This historiography does not deny the role of the 18th-century *philosophes* in the prerevolutionary phase, but it only goes so far as to declare that their role was to act as an echo of the people's aspirations and that their desire was simply to reform the monarchy, not to destroy it. In this view, any assessment of the cause of the Revolution will only take into consideration the movement that emerged from the people.

The opposite position was taken by counterrevolutionary authors who were horrified by the revolutionaries' crimes and sacrilegious hatred. When they tried to understand how such an outburst of destructive violence could happen, they naturally thought that the Revolution, satanic in its inspiration, was also satanic in the way it was carried out—the result of a vast conspiracy that swung into action concurrent with the so-called Enlightenment.

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This interpretation rests upon a very detailed investigation conducted by the Jesuit Augustin Barruel, author of *Memoirs to Serve as the History of Jacobinism*. Barruel's conclusion was that the entire revolutionary process had been organized by Freemasons—in particular, the branch called the Bavarian Illuminati. Barruel's strength is in his historical documentation of the secret societies, which had previously been regarded as harmless. This documentation had been assembled during the very years of the Revolution. His weakness is his habit of hastily drawing certain conclusions from mere indications. He did not show, for example, how the secret power he denounced succeeded in maintaining unity amid the chaos. Nonetheless, throughout the 19th century, his conclusions constituted the basis of the Catholic interpretation of revolutionary events, and this includes pontifical documents, which often referred to the conspiracy against society and religion conducted by impious Freemasons. The same documents paid scant attention to the institutional aspects of their hold on society.

It is against this backdrop that Cochin's originality should be understood. Unlike Barruel, Cochin starts with the events themselves, seeking to determine the logic by which they unfolded. (This procedure derives more from the sociological method than from traditional historical research.) We can follow his method by looking at a little essay entitled, "How the Deputies Were Elected to the Estates-General."

Cochin begins by comparing the French and the English conceptions of civil liberties. "The French conception," he says in speaking of the *ancien régime*, "is positive, realistic, organic." The people is considered as it actually exists in the world, and it is the people that the king convokes in order to formulate his claims and proposals. Traditionally, the people, "in its estates"—its constituent bodies—is made up of the clergy, the nobility, and all the others, who form the Third Estate. The delegates elected by the parishes must conform to the representational mandate that is entrusted to them, notably that of presenting to the king the "Lists of Grievances" (*Cahiers de doléance*), which are derived from the actual complaints of those who give their mandate to the delegates.

In the English conception, Cochin observes,

> It is to the individual that the power is addressed, that is to say, it is the explicit and present conscience of each, an abstraction made out of the social milieu, out of the actual situation, duties, and deeds. . . . Thence comes the importance of the election, of the vote, the only circumstance and only act which allows this new being, the abstract and unreal citizen, to affirm his existence. Thence comes the need for a special landscape, politics, which allows him to show himself, and the need for a special body (the Parliament), to be the depository of his thoughts and his powers, and of a dogma—liberty—which consecrates his superiority over the real being, the concrete human person, engaged in all the trammels of real life.

Necker, who organized the meeting of the Estates-General, wanted to reconcile the two conceptions. His regulation of January 1789 broadened the traditional right to vote to include electors whose social position would not have previously let them qualify. The naming of deputies was according to bailiwicks, ancient jurisdictions fallen into disuse and therefore artificial, uniting people who did not know one another or habitually work together. And, although the old ban on forming electoral factions and campaigning was maintained, no one was entrusted with the duty of drawing up the Lists of Grievances. This process takes place at different levels (parishes, towns, on up to the provincial level, and, ultimately, at the great Assembly at Versailles).

Cochin brings out the destabilizing effect of these procedures, which are propitious to every conceivable kind of manipulation. "The effect is marvelous," he says. "Imagine hundreds of peasants, unknown to each other, some of them coming from twenty or thirty places, parked in the nave of a church and asked to draw up within one week a report on the reform of the kingdom." He concludes, "In sum, thanks to the strange amalgam of the two systems—the English, which breaks up the social framework, and the French, which excludes all personal influence—the regulation of January 1789 put the electors not into liberty but into the void."

Such a situation ought to have produced a great cacophony: It is difficult to imagine how a people so deracinated, reduced to a collection of individuals, isolated and deprived of a common political awareness, could succeed in naming genuinely representative delegates and, above all, in drawing up coherent claims and propositions. "But in fact," asks Cochin,

> what happens? The work is done everywhere as if it were the easiest thing in the world. The statements are drawn up—and the identical claims are made everywhere, sometimes with exactly the same spelling mistakes. The deputies are named as if by enchantment: It is as if, side by side with the real people, which could not make their voices heard, there was another which spoke through it.

Cochin calls this group of ventriloquists "the Small People" or "the ideal city"—by which he means the artificial city, the utopian fabrication of a countersociety dreamed up by all the adepts of free thought so prevalent in the 18th century, what he calls "*sociétés de pensée*." (This is usually translated as "philosophical societies," though their work was more in the nature of ideological propaganda than actual philosophy.)

When Cochin speaks of free thought, he means not only atheism but all the constructivist thought that operates in total contempt of existing reality, deriving its principles directly from modern philosophical idealism and from the claim of individual autonomy that it establishes. The freethinker is the man who claims to construct reality in his own image without any regard for the order of Creation. And where is this new type of man to be found on the eve of the Revolution? In the Masonic lodges, in the literary salons, in the patriotic societies that would give birth, some months later, to the political clubs (those groups that would hold meetings in the convents of the Feuillants, the Jacobins, and the Cordeliers).

How could relations between these two "peoples" be conducted? The response today would be obvious, now that the manipulation of groups and crowds is a familiar phenomenon. A century ago, the evidence did not exist. Cochin contended that every official meeting of the Great People is prepared for by a meeting of the Small People, who determines what is to be willed by the other. The effectiveness of the maneuver is guaranteed by the moral defects of the people who undergo it coupled with their lack of awareness. "Stupidity, laziness, timidity, the herd instinct—in a word, inertia. . . . Pure democracy needs

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inertia, just as authority needs loyalty."

Certain circumstances favor this manipulation. Necker's regulation is judged very harshly by Cochin. Reviving certain old traditions, he prohibits preparatory gatherings or campaigns aimed at picking candidates; he also gives free reign to secret manipulations, which have been much facilitated by the "philosophical societies." This same regulation forced the assemblies to vote publicly; intimidation, therefore, was easy. (Throughout the Revolution, elected representatives were subjected to harassment and even mob violence.)

All that remains is to implement a system for sorting out the delegates, not through philosophical discussion but by exclusion and expulsion. Cochin, in this regard, studies the case of the town of Rennes. Of the 800 delegates of the parishes, he identifies only five percent at most who are sympathetic to the *philosophes*, all people from the town. How could this urban minority impose itself on the rural masses? Cochin notes the weakness of these masses, which consist of people who have been deprived of common ties, without either leaders or councils, disoriented, noisy, sometimes drunk. The maneuver is executed in two stages. Gate-crashers are brought in, tough men hired by those who pull the strings, and they come to occupy all the ranks of this already disparate assembly. One of the agents of the Small People then proposes to exclude certain members who are judged undesirable. After a great uproar, in which the lower elements participate, the coup succeeds, allowing the group in charge, in the following days, to impose the agenda and, above all, to select the "good" deputies for the Estates-General. The operation is a complete success, especially since the majority of parish delegates ask only to be allowed to return home.

Cochin cites a speech made by a member of a Masonic lodge in Rennes (July 23, 1789):

> [T]he triumph of liberty and patriotism is the most complete triumph of the true mason. How fine is the day, my very dear brothers, when a citizen king comes to announce that he wishes to command a free people and to turn his superb empire into a vast lodge in which all good Frenchmen are going to be truly brothers.

Cochin's intuition is that the revolutionary process is a sort of bureaucratic social machine whose managers are merely cogs. He concludes that the machinery of the revolutionary utopia tends to coincide with the society of which it is taking possession. It begins by stripping away the personality of its own members, who will be used, in turn, to strip away the personality of the others in order to arrive at a general homogeneity. Thus, the Small People acts as an avant-garde in the general massification of society, the goal of which is the replacement of society by one "vast lodge," a "city of the clouds" reconstructed on the basis of such general ideas as "human rights" and not on the real conditions of the *homo viator*.

The Revolution is thus understood as a violent passage from a social order founded on Christian humanism to a new, homogeneous order established on the basis of mechanical conformism. This is what Cochin calls "the revolutionary abstraction."

Since this disaggregated mass is homogeneous, equally distributed among uniform compartments so that the political arithmetic of surveillance can be exercised on units of the same order, constraint and the management of mutual suspicions have a multiplying effect: "The force of things makes each citizen both the natural enemy and the watcher of his neighbor." Cochin observes that,

> during the ten months of the Terror, France presented, district by district, commune by commune, man by man, the spectacle of this war between convicts on the same chain. This is, in addition, both the condition and the effect of the socialized order: Universal hate has its equilibrium, just as love has its harmony.

Today, we would call this a management of low intensity, one that does not require the mobilization of a great number of armed troops, except in the face of strong resistance, as happened in the Vendée uprising. It is "a system of government by self-interest, by surveillance, and the hatred of others." Cochin notes with a certain irony that this system is the realization of the third term of the revolutionary motto, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity."

The thought of Augustin Cochin is characterized by the intersection of documentary research and theory. Although he was largely interested in the "philosophical societies" of the Enlightenment, he also pays close attention to the revolutionary process. Thus, he furnishes abundant materials for understanding the broader development of his comprehensive theory. Some might judge his sociological interpretation too systematic: In emphasizing social mechanisms, it is possible to underestimate the part played by the uncertainty that derives from human factors and from the imponderable ways of Providence. Such a method can also minimize the conscious and deliberate role played by "Great Men," as Hegel termed them.

This impression is confirmed by Cochin's long critical study, "The Revolutionary Crisis: Taine and Aulard." Aulard had delivered a spiteful critique of Taine's case against the revolutionaries, which he reduced to a caricature. Taine was the first "revisionist historian," though he had adopted the objective method of a strict examining magistrate in order to demonstrate the guilt of the revolutionaries. Cochin, however, thinks Taine does not explain the reasons that impelled such people to become pitiless murderers. "From the beginning," he writes, "the Revolution seems a crisis of insanity," and that is what he is trying to understand. In a sense, he agrees with the socialist republican Aulard on that point: The role of men is secondary. For him, the Revolution is "the natural effect of a general situation, not a conspiracy."

That is why, far from subscribing to the thesis of Barruel, he expressly rejects it: "The argument for a plot has taken many forms, from the naive form, with Father Barruel, whose melodramatic conspiracy connects Voltaire with Babeuf, all the way to the learned form. . . . The Revolution . . . is a tyranny, it is true, but a tyranny without tyrants."

Even if the paleographer and archivist Cochin allows himself to get carried away by his enthusiasm for the social sciences at the very moment when they are being developed, and even if he does neglect one relevant spirit of genuine conspiracy—the hatred of the Catholic Church that developed into sacrilege and the murder of priests—his political intuition is essential to understanding the revolutionary process. Unfortunately, we had to wait more than 60 years for recognized historians to pay attention.

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Pax Americana

by H.A. Scott Trask

"America is not to be Rome or Britain. It is to be America."

—Charles Beard

The War Over Iraq: Saddam's Tyranny and America's Mission
by Lawrence F. Kaplan and William Kristol
San Francisco: Encounter Books; 146 pp., $29.95

Empire: The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power
by Niall Ferguson
New York: Basic Books; 370 pp., $35.00

◆

Jeff Drew

William Kristol boasts that September 11 proves the neocons to have been prophets because, after the Cold War, they alone warned that the world had become a *more* dangerous place, not a safer one. He and his crowd cite three factors that have made it so: the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; the rise of terrorism; and the emergence of rogue states. Kristol says that, if only the United States had increased defense spending in the 1990's, intervened in the affairs of more countries, fought more wars, overthrown more governments, and tried more war criminals, September 11 would never have happened.

As usual, Kristol has everything exactly backward.

September 11 vindicated the paleoconservatives' critique of American immigration and foreign policy. For over ten years now, the paleos have forecast an approaching clash of civilizations between a decadent West and Islam, pointed to the vulnerability created by mass immigration from the Third World, and warned of the dangers of blowback from interventionism. If the country today is both more vulnerable and more likely to be attacked by terrorists, it is precisely because of the suicidal policies pursued by the last three administrations—with the full support of the neocons.

For any American, the foremost consideration should be for *American* security. With the implosion of the Soviet Union in the early 1990's, the United States became a *safer* country (as nearly everyone recognized at the time), no longer in need of a $300-billion defense budget or forward bases in Europe and East Asia. If Washington had devoted one third of the Cold War budget to guarding our borders and had stopped Muslim (and other) immigration, we would today be as secure and peaceful as our grandfathers were in the 1920's. Regrettably, our ruling elite had a different plan.

It took them ten years to work out the details, find a new enemy, and prepare the public for a new 50-year war, but they have completed the work and are now busily showcasing the finished product. Less than one third of the new book by the neocon tag team of Kristol and Kagan is devoted to making the case for the invasion and occupation of Iraq. Mostly, it is a defense of the new national-security strategy, with its four key elements of preemption, regime change, unilateralism, and global military supremacy. President Bush had already defined preemption as the right to confront threats "before they emerge." This definition, however, is far too restrictive for our authors, who cite Clinton's military intervention in the Bosnian civil war and his bombing of Belgrade as early examples of the theory at work. Needless to say, they never explain what threat, in the present or the remotest future, Serbia could possibly have posed to the United States. Nevertheless, they are indignant at Clinton's failure to take earlier action against Milosevic's "aggression."

Kristol's and Kagan's book is built on a series of presumptions, foremost among them the idea that the world would descend into chaos and mass slaughter without a global hegemon. "The alternative to American leadership is a chaotic, Hobbesian world where there is no authority to thwart aggression, ensure peace and security or enforce international norms." A close second is American innocence. Not only can the American

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H.A. Scott Trask, Ph.D., is completing The Fight for the Old Republic: the Northern Anti-War Movement, 1861-1865, *and has sent* Hard Money, Free Trade, and State Rights: The Northern Jeffersonian Condy Raguet *to the publisher.*

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global rulers do no wrong; they have *done* no wrong—ever. This presumption is founded on another—the total ignorance of their readers. This book was written for those who know no history, remember nothing, and glean their knowledge of current events from Fox News. The authors are so blinded by ideology that no instance of American villainy, perfidy, or hypocrisy is allowed to penetrate their consciousness.

For Kristol and Kagan, the United States is, and should ever remain, "at once a European power, an Asian power and, of course, a Middle Eastern power." Clearly, those who believe that the United States should return to being a mere North American power are in need of illumination. But why not a Latin American or South American power, also? The authors do not say, but there is no mystery here. These backwater regions are not strategically significant for Kristol and Kagan. What matters is achieving full-spectrum domination (military, political, and economic) over the Eurasian landmass. That is the real objective of Bush's neocon-influenced foreign policy, the Anglo-American war on Iraq being simply one step toward that consummation. To those hand-wringers who believe that American world domination could pose a threat to freedom or could corrupt its possessors, Kristol and Kagan reply, "Well, what is wrong with dominance, in the service of sound principles and high ideals?" What indeed?

According to the writers, we have an "obligation" to defend "Taiwan, Israel, and Europe." Since they also believe that we have the "obligation" to defend freedom *everywhere*, this list might seem redundant. In fact, of course, they wish to emphasize the second-named country, with Taiwan thrown in for balance and Europe as a sop to the Middle American helots. Kristol and Kagan never inform us of the identity of the country against which we must continue to defend Europe; to name Russia would expose them to ridicule. However, they do specify the authority that has laid the heavy "burden" of world leadership upon American shoulders. President Bush would say it is God Himself, but the godless neocons speak of "history" and "fate." This investiture gives the United States the "right" "to impose its will on others" and to "be the world's policeman or its sheriff," as well as its "beacon and guide."

According to Kristol and Kagan, the last three American presidents possessed "distinctive world views," which led to radically different foreign policies. George H.W. Bush's "narrow realism" inhibited him from intervening or waging war unless it was in the national interest, narrowly defined. Bill Clinton was averse "to the use of force" and wedded to a "wishful liberalism" of negotiation, treaties, and collective action. The authors contend that both administrations were far too mindful of such puerile considerations as "limits," "restraint," and "humility," with which a power as great and good as the United States need not concern itself. They regret that Bush the Younger began his administration as a hesitant leader still under the influence of his father's "narrow realism." Thank God—err, history—for September 11, which transformed Bush overnight into a statesman of vision who saw that only American global suzerainty could save the world from the forces of evil. The authors remind us that "evil exists in the world, and it has consequences." Not to worry, though: "Evil can be defeated"—but only by the United States of America.

Andrew Bacevich's *American Empire* offers a much more accurate history of U.S. foreign policy over the past 12 years. Bacevich argues that the last three presidents have shared a common worldview and followed, essentially, the same foreign policy. Bush the Elder authorized the first postwar "humanitarian intervention," in Somalia. His secretary of defense became his son's Vice President, and his chairman of the joint chiefs became George Junior's secretary of state. Clinton's secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, championed the use of force as a regular component of U.S. foreign policy, and her idea of "the indispensable nation" became one of the core components of the Wolfowitz/Perle national-security strategy. And Clinton himself was not averse to acting unilaterally and without U.N. sanction when it suited his purpose (*e.g.*, the Sudan bombing).

Without bothering to offer any evidence or argument, Kristol and Kagan allege that Saddam Hussein posed a serious threat both to the United States and to the peace of the world. According to them, Saddam's regime qualified "as one of the world's most dangerous." (More dangerous than nuclear-armed and saber-rattling North Korea, for whom President Bush recommends diplomacy and regional pressure?) They also refer to Iraq's "ever more threatening" "arsenal" of weaponry, without bothering to explain what it is, whom it threatens, or how. In their attempt to prove that Saddam possessed "weapons of mass destruction," they fail even to mention Scott Ritter, much less refute the case of this former weapons inspector. Now that the war has ended without Saddam having unleashed his deadly "arsenal" upon the invading Anglo-American army, and without the occupation having uncovered evidence of "weapons of mass destruction," Ritter has been vindicated.

For neoconservatives, exaggerating—

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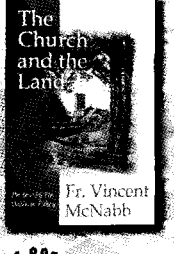

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or fabricating—the threat posed by foreign adversaries is a long tradition. Kristol and Kagan themselves refer to Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz's membership in "Team B" in 1976 as a matter for boasting. Yet Team B got it all wrong. CIA assessments of Soviet economic and military capabilities during the Cold War grossly overestimated the reality, yet Wolfowitz's outside "experts" charged the intelligence community with *underestimating* the Soviet threat. *The War Over Iraq* claims that America's mission to promote democracy is an "inheritance" that "has shaped two centuries of U.S. foreign policy." Yet the authors offer no evidence for this brazenly unhistorical claim. Besides, what they really favor is *imposing* democracy by force, in accordance with a tradition begun by Woodrow Wilson and, thus, less than a century old.

Curiously, the authors endorse President Bush's declaration that "America has no empire to extend or utopia to establish." Clearly, she has both. What is the occupation of Iraq but an extension of the American Empire, and what is the President's constant vow to bring about world peace and justice and to extirpate terrorism everywhere but a utopian fantasy? What's more, many of the neocons are now boldly affirming the existence and desirability of an American Empire. Kristol and Kagan seem to be working from the old playbook here, it being OK nowadays to avow the imperial mantle. Nevertheless, they are clear about what must be done to maintain the empire: The government must spend an additional $100 billion on the "defense" budget and build a continental missile defense. Surprisingly, they admit the real purpose of the latter to be to protect our ability to project power overseas. In other words, defense is adjunct to U.S. offensive capabilities.

While Kristol's and Kagan's screed seems designed to give the reader indigestion, British historian Niall Ferguson's history of the British Empire is enjoyable to read. It is a well-written book, light on p.c., balanced, thorough, beautifully illustrated with photos and maps, and would make a magnificent text for a college course on the subject. However, the introduction and conclusion read as a brief for the neocon case for empire. Ferguson argues that the blessings of modernization and globalization are largely fruits of the British Empire, without whose benevolent global rule the structures of liberal capitalism, parliamentary democracy, rule of law, and university education would be nonexistent in most parts of the globe. In his view, the empire, despite its flaws, was a force for enormous good in the world, especially in those countries that once were directly subject to it. Furthermore, he strongly implies that, without British naval and military might, these blessings would never have been diffused outward from the British Isles—not, at least, on a large scale.

Ferguson goes further. In his view, the chronic instability, violence, kleptocracy, and corruption that still afflict so much of the world, inhibiting development and orderly progress, can alone be suppressed by a new global power—the "only one power capable of playing an imperial role in the modern world . . . the United States. Indeed, to some degree it is already playing that role." American world rulers, in their new capacity, can learn many things from studying the history of the British Empire. The first is that America "can do a very great deal to impose its preferred values on less technologically advanced societies." The second is that she must be willing to use force to impose peace and civilization upon an unruly and barbarous world. A third is that the burden of an expanded empire would really be quite light. Whether measured in wealth, armaments, or population, the United States is today far more powerful than was Great Britain at her imperial zenith. Ferguson argues that the United States could double her military budget, more than double her foreign aid and investment, and send many more of her sons and daughters abroad as soldiers, sailors, aid workers, technicians, businessmen, missionaries, and educators. All America lacks is the *will* to empire. Ferguson is distressed that, since 1972, the United States has consistently imported more capital and labor than she has exported and that she remains "a reluctant ruler of other peoples." In short, although America "has a much bigger economy, many more people, a much larger arsenal" than her British predecessor,

> it is an empire that lacks the drive to export its capital, its people and its culture to those backward regions which need them most urgently and which, if they are neglected, will breed the greatest threats to its security. It is an empire, in short, that dare not speak its name. It is an empire in denial.

To end this "denial" is one of the objects of his book.

There is one question that Ferguson never asks: Did the peoples of the British Isles (English, Scotch, Welsh, and Irish) benefit or suffer from the burden of global empire? Are England and Scotland wealthier, more cultured, more civilized, more European, or less so because of their imperial role? Ferguson does not ask, because he does not care about the answer. His imperial altruism does not extend to his own nation.

The idea of an indispensable and innocent nation, which is the core of both Ferguson's and Kristol's and Kagan's books, is profoundly un-Christian. God alone is sovereign over His world and, hence, alone indispensable. The close alliance between neocons and American theocons raises the question of whether the Christianity of the so-called Christian Right is really Christian at all. Regardless, a persuasion that endorses Jacobin crusades, flouts the laws and sovereignty of nations, imposes "democracy" by violence, and openly aspires to world domination certainly is not of the right or of God, but rather of the left.

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"A US brothel is offering free sex to US troops who took part in the war against Iraq to thank them for their endeavours abroad. . . .

"'We wanted to show our appreciation for everything they've done,' Dennis Hof, the proprietor, told BBC News Online. 'We wanted to give these guys some special care and attention.'

"Mr Hof said the idea had been put to him by one of his female employees, who had served in the war. . . .

"'It would be really great to get those guys to come over to the Bunnyranch,' he said."

—from "Free sex offer for US troops," BBC News Online (June 4)

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Le dernier rire

by Thomas Fleming

The French Revolution
by Hippolyte Taine
Indianapolis: Liberty Press;
3 vols., $60.00

Lectures on the French Revolution
by John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton
Indianapolis: Liberty Press;
342 pp., $21.00

◆

I am frequently asked to recommend the best book on ancient history or moral philosophy or the French Revolution, and, since I do not believe there is one best book on anything, I usually content myself with saying what not to read: Do not read Donald Kagan or Paul Rahe on the ancients; and do not read Martha Nussbaum or Mortimer Adler on anything. With that *caveat* issued, a few cautious recommendations of a number of books might be made, accompanied by the warning that each of the writers has his biases and flaws. Above all, readers should go to books written in the period that interests them—the historians, naturally, but also the poets and dramatists. Do not rely on the synthesizers, even if they are great minds such as Arnold Toynbee rather than fat wallets such as Mortimer Adler.

The case of the French Revolution is very hard. There are, of course, excellent monographs on the revolutionary army or the economy or the political infighting among revolutionary factions in Paris, written by such solid historians as Richard Cobb, George Lefebvre, Norman Hampson, and Alfred Soboul, among many others, but there is, in fact, no one good comprehensive book that reveals the full extent of the evil. Most of the great older historians were, after all, liberals who wanted either to put the best face on the entire project or, at least, to prove that the excesses of the Terror did not stem from the principles of 1789. Dickens and Carlyle both embraced the pleasing fantasy that it was the best of times and the worst of times, when it was, in fact, only the worst of times. Among books in English, Sir Walter Scott's *Life of Napoleon*, despite its many factual errors and partial judgments, offers the most sound conservative view of the Revolution, and it is a disgrace that, when so many liberal books are being reprinted, no foundation has devoted the resources to publishing an annotated and corrected edition of Scott. Of books in French, the writings of Augustin Cochin are perhaps the most profound, but they are untranslated and out of print.

Conservatives, thus, have to settle for books written by honest and well-intentioned liberals. Hilaire Belloc somewhere remarks that it was the posthumous fate of Charles I to have had no history written in his defense. The earl of Clarendon, so often taken for a loyal supporter of the monarchy, was, in the beginning, a parliamentarian converted only reluctantly to the royalist cause, and whatever Stuart sympathies he might have had were alienated by Charles II's ingratitude to himself and by James II's seduction of his daughter. When the moderate Clarendon is taken as an extreme loyalist, the effect is to make rabid anti-Stuart propaganda appear balanced and moderate.

There are few good conservative books on the Revolution; Belloc himself was quite mad on the subject and infected Chesterton with a high regard for Robespierre, who was, in addition to being a vindictive mass murderer, a contemptible pettifogger.

Of English liberal books on the Revolution, Lord Acton's lectures are among the best: Sober, painstaking, honest, and coherent, they cover most of the important political movements and figures. As a political interpreter, Acton is always judicious, hardly ever letting his admittedly aristocratic prejudices cloud his judgment. If anything, it is his classical liberal philosophy that proves to be excess baggage. As a Catholic, he once observed of himself, he was a good liberal, and his failure to grasp the full spiritual and social significance of the Revolution is manifest in his decision to concentrate on the power struggle in Paris at the expense of the social revolution, the war of the center against the countryside, and the campaign to destroy not only the Catholic Church but Catholics themselves.

No time spent reading Acton can be wasted. His limitations were those of his time and his liberal creed; his very real merits—his industrious reading and analysis of original documents, his balanced temperament, his ability to synthesize details into a coherent narrative—were his own. The Liberty Fund and Stephen Tonsor (who has contributed a useful introduction) are both owed a debt of gratitude for bringing these lectures into print.

Of the French historians who have devoted themselves to the Revolution, none is completely satisfactory. François Furet, who, in recent years, put revolutionary history back on the course of honesty and sanity, was a communist-turned-social-democrat, with little sympathy for the Church or for the dispossessed aristocrats. The weakest parts of his great book on the revolutionary tradition, *Revolutionary France, 1770-1880*, are those devoted to the counterrevolutionary conservatives—though Furet is wise enough to crib enough quotations from Chateaubriand to enliven his otherwise uninspiring prose. Charmless in style, Furet was a true academic historian with no gift for narrative. He remains, nonetheless, a giant, and the circle of historians with whom he is associated, such as Mona Ozouf, are carrying on his initiative with great success.

It is Mona Ozouf, in fact, whose article on Hippolyte Taine has been borrowed to serve as the introduction to Liberty Press's three-volume edition of Taine's *The French Revolution*. Best known as a literary critic and historian, Taine was a moderate constitutionalist in the tradition of Guizot. As suspicious of popular despotism as was Alexis de Tocqueville (whose *Ancien Régime* may be a more important book than *Democracy in America*), the liberal Taine had much in common with the disgruntled English liberals who were his contemporaries, Fitzjames Stephen and Henry Sumner Maine. Like them, he understood that authentic political liberty could only be secured in a nation that preserved its tradition of social order and shrunk from the diabolical abstractions of equality and fraternity.

Taine was best known as a literary critic, a disciple of Saint-Beuve, who admired the energy and spontaneity of Musset. He was shaken to the core, however, by France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War and by the insanity of the Paris commune. He determined on writing what he hoped would be an objective account of France's progress from the *ancien régime* to the France of his own day. This was the genesis of the three-part plan of his *Origines de la France Contemporaine*. A diabetic before the age of insulin, he lived to finish only the first two parts, the second of which (in three volumes) is devoted to the Revolution.

Despite the somewhat mechanical rigor of his mind, Taine had a gift for the

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telling detail and for imaginative description, and, although some historians have complained that he piles anecdote upon anecdote, he understood very well that, in the case of the Revolution, the devil was truly in the details. Reading his description of the September massacres, the grisly details of which I was previously familiar, I had to get up out of my chair and pace the floor, so disturbing was the cumulative force of the stories.

To Taine's great credit, he was not taken in by the myth of two revolutions: the British-style reformist revolution of 1789, followed by the Jacobin Terror caused by a few bad men who betrayed the spirit of 1789. This pernicious myth—like the myth of the good Kerensky in 1917 or of England's Glorious Revolution—blinds us to the realities of our own times, when socialists and Trotskyists complain that 60's radicals betrayed the dream. Trotsky was as foul as Stalin; Kerensky, a Marxist (albeit a gradualist); and the troublemakers of 1789—the followers of Sieyès, Mirabeau, Lafayette, Orléans—a set of plotters, freemasons, and rascals.

Although, as Mona Ozouf points out, Taine's view of the Revolution was soon rejected, it hit French intellectuals like a blockbuster. Even in 1912, Irving Babbitt, who thoroughly disliked Taine for his critical philosophy, felt the aftershocks. "It is hardly likely," wrote Babbitt in his great work on French criticism,

> that what one may term the legend of the Revolution will ever recover from the somber and concentrated energy of his attack. It will not be easy for the Hugos and Michelets of the future to grow rhapsodic over the "giants of '93."

The neoclassical Babbitt naturally rejected Taine's attempt to link the ruthlessly logical terrorists with the "classical tradition," but he was (as Babbitt usually was) one-sided in his criticism. It is precisely the formalist tradition of Descartes and the facile pseudoclassicism of Voltaire that prepared the minds of the Jacobin club.

Conservatives of every age would find much to object to in Taine's philosophy, but one of the greatest of French conservatives, Maurice Barrès, inserts a wonderful portrait of the aging critic into his novel *Les déracinés*. The courtly old man goes to visit a young admirer from Lorraine and takes him on a walk to Les Invalides (where Napoleon is buried), where he shows him a great plane tree, which he describes in beautiful detail, intimating (I am oversimplifying) that the organic interrelationship of parts is a better model for the young man and his provincial friends in Paris than the rootless individualism taught by the liberals.

> See what pure health it is in. There is no predominance in its trunk, its branches, its leaves. It is a rustling federation. It is its own law, and it flourishes. . . . What a good lesson for rhetoric, and not only for the art of literate people but also what a guide for thinking.

For Barrès, Hippolyte Taine offered confirmation of his own provincialism, his attachment to the roots of his family and history in Lorraine; he also represented an alternative to the sterile rationality of all internationalisms. The French Revolution was, among other things, a war of the center against the provinces, just as it was a war for an abstract international ideal of liberty, equality, and fraternity (identified by the Jacobins with France itself) that would destroy the real France. As Furet understood, that revolutionary war has continued, breaking out in Russia in 1917, in the United States during the spasmodic episodes of the 1930's, the 60's, and in the current call for a global order of peace, justice, and democracy that will eradicate evil. Robespierre, it seems, has the last laugh.

Thomas Fleming is the author of Montenegro: The Divided Land.

Return of Capital

by Greg Kaza

The Real Warren Buffett: Managing Capital, Leading People
by James O'Loughlin
London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing; 260 pp., $27.50

One of the great ironies of the late-1990's stock-market bubble is that more Americans followed the advice of Wall Street scam artists than that of Omaha billionaire Warren E. Buffett, the best money manager in the second half of the 20th century.

The "New Paradigm" fooled much of America; Buffett and his partner, Charlie Munger, however, shunned technology and internet stocks. "Only in the sales presentations of investment banks," Buffett, the CEO of Berkshire-Hathaway, Inc., wrote to shareholders in March 2000, "do earnings move forever upward." His remarks were prescient. The tech-heavy NASDAQ peaked the same month before losing 75 percent of its value, the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell three consecutive years (2000-02) for the first time in the postwar era, and Washington has struggled to restore public confidence in U.S. capital markets. Surveying this carnage, more Americans may wish they had listened not only to Buffett but to the best money manager of the first half of the 20th century—Julius Pierpont Morgan—who famously said, "I'm not interested in return *on* capital. I'm interested in return *of* capital."

In some respects, Buffett, the second-richest man in America behind Microsoft's Bill Gates, was the public face of the market in the 1990's. The financial press extolled the man who compounded money at a 22.6-percent average annual rate after buying Berkshire in 1964. A $10,000 investment is worth more than *$40 million* today. By contrast, a similar investment in the S&P 500, which represents a broad cross section of corporate America, is worth only $144,000. Berkshire's class-A shares, the world's most expensive, have traded as high as $84,000 on the New York Stock Exchange. Buffett terms the firm's annual meeting, held in Omaha in early May, "the Capitalist Woodstock." It attracts upward of 15,000 pilgrims, including finance professors confused by Buffett's ability to beat the market consistently, an event the Efficient Markets Theory (EMT), taught in business schools, suggests should not occur. "To invest successfully," Buffett said,

> you need not understand beta, efficient markets, modern portfolio theory, option pricing or emerging markets. You may, in fact, be better off knowing nothing of these. That, of course, is not the prevailing view at most business schools.

In other respects, Buffett's critique of management practices is radical for a CEO. These include the expensing of stock options; the use of special charges for restructuring and mergers; and the ubiquitous Earnings Before Interest, Taxes,

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Depreciation, and Amortization (EBIDTA). "References to EBIDTA make us shudder," Buffett noted; "[D]oes management think the tooth fairy pays for capital expenditures?" In 1998, he warned that "a significant and growing number of otherwise high-grade managers have come to the view that it's okay to manipulate earnings to satisfy what they believe are Wall Street's desires"—this at a time when much of the investor class wanted only to be reminded how rich the market was making them, a task the financial press was all too eager to perform.

James O'Loughlin does not dwell on these warnings. Instead, he examines Buffett's and Munger's management style, which he considers unique in corporate America. The duo, he argues, pursues a "hands off" management style based on "minimum rules of behavior, which tap into a form of motivation that comes from within." According to this approach, no amount of "management of the individual will engender the desired behavior." The dominant management style, he contends, is based on retired General Electric CEO Jack Welch's "command-and-control style" of "alternately hugging and kicking, setting stretch goals, and relentlessly following up on people to make sure things get done." A key conclusion is that Buffett relies on managers who act like owners. He holds more than 99 percent of his own personal net worth in Berkshire-Hathaway stock.

Mr. O'Loughlin describes how Berkshire has overcome the "institutional imperative." "In business school I was given no hint of the imperative's existence, and I did not intuitively understand it when I entered the business world," Buffett said. In his own words, the imperative may be summed up as follows:

> [(1) A]s if governed by Newton's First Law of Motion, an institution will resist any change in its current direction; (2) Just as work expands to fill the available time, corporate projects or acquisitions will materialize to soak up additional funds; (3) Any business craving of the leader, however foolish, will be quietly supported by detailed rate of return and strategic studies prepared by his troops; (4) The behavior of peer companies, whether they are expanding, acquiring, setting executive compensation or whatever, will be mindlessly imitated.

Buffett and Munger work to cripple the institutional imperative. "After 25 years of buying and supervising a great variety of businesses," Buffett said, "Charlie and I have not learned how to solve difficult business problems. What we have learned is how to avoid them." To those who adhere to strategic plans for the reassurance they provide, this mindset is deeply disturbing. There is no *dynamic*: Buffett has no strategic plan, because it would interfere with his ability to allocate capital, which he does exceptionally well, while Munger has developed a series of intellectual filters designed to prevent the duo from making investing mistakes.

We can see the influence of Howard Buffett (1903-64) operating on his only son, although Loughlin does not discuss it. Howard was a stockbroker, frugal in his habits, who aspired in college to a career in journalism. He was also a four-term Nebraska congressman, a prophetic figure of the Old Right (according to Murray N. Rothbard), and the Midwest campaign manager for Sen. Robert Taft's doomed 1952 bid for the Republican nomination. (Warren, who began his career as a stockbroker, still lives in the same modest Omaha house and owns newspapers through Berkshire; his poli-

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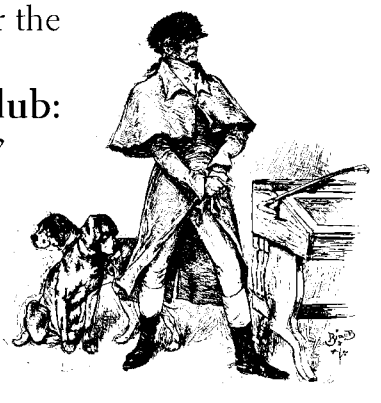

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tics, however, are Democratic.) Howard, who encouraged independent thought as a habit, adopted from Emerson a favorite maxim: "The great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude."

On January 18, 1965, shortly after his father's death, Warren wrote shareholders of the Buffett Partnership, Ltd., "We derive no comfort because important people, vocal people, or great numbers of people agree with us. Nor do we derive comfort if they don't." The eagerness of managers to follow the institutional imperative, and of investors to follow the madding crowd, it seems, have replaced the critical thinking practiced by father and son.

Greg Kaza is executive director of the Arkansas Public Policy Foundation.

The Now and Future Pat Buchanan

by Jerry Woodruff

Street Corner Conservative: Patrick J. Buchanan and His Times
by Joseph Scotchie
Alexander, NC: Alexander Books;
352 pp., $18.50

◆

Did Pat Buchanan's politics fail? That is not a question Joseph Scotchie's biography explicitly seeks to answer, but it is one that a reader of the book cannot help asking. As the Reform Party's candidate, in his third and last presidential bid, Buchanan earned less than one percent of the vote. In his exposition of the 1992 presidential campaign, Scotchie himself asks, "Was Pat Buchanan a leader of a new movement that would transform American politics or was he just a colorful commentator out of his league . . . ?"

Today, perhaps only die-hard political junkies remember the GOP's 1992 New Hampshire primary, when Buchanan's second-place showing rocked the White House and sent its occupant's campaign consultants scurrying back to their polling data and campaign manuals. After the polls closed, Buchanan, with a shoestring budget and a skeleton staff of mostly amateurs, had won a stunning 38 percent of the vote against George Bush, the sitting President and a former CIA director whose impeccable Republican political résumé included having been Ronald Reagan's vice president. Virtually the same showing in New Hampshire in 1968 by political newcomer Eugene McCarthy, an antiwar academic, drove President Lyndon Johnson out of the race altogether.

Scotchie, who is at his best recreating the essential details as well as the spirit of the controversies driving the conflicts he describes, puts Buchanan's showing in the right political context:

> As his campaign began clicking in Georgia [where he would earn another respectable 37 percent], Buchanan's standing in American politics was being transformed. No longer was he a conservative gadfly making life difficult for a sitting Republican president. His victory in New Hampshire made Buchanan a political force in his own right, the leader of a potentially significant chunk of the GOP. His status as a politician who wanted to dramatically [*sic*] alter American politics was now taken seriously by the Washington media establishment. As such, not only the Nixon-Reagan coalition, but the entire conservative movement was being ripped apart. "Conservatives haven't been this divided since the 1950's," claimed Fred Barnes. Indeed, by surviving New Hampshire and doing well in Georgia, Buchanan could now lay claim as a national political leader.

Scotchie notes that, as a result, "Back in Washington, the tone of liberal and conservative criticism of Buchanan was taken to a higher level. . . . Now the real heavy artillery was rolled out." The attacks on Buchanan were unusually ferocious. "On *Crossfire* one evening, [cohost Michael] Kinsley remarked that the level of criticism brought against Buchanan was unprecedented in recent political history."

Pat Buchanan suddenly found himself denounced by self-styled GOP standard-bearers William J. Bennett and Charles Krauthammer for "fascistic" tendencies and "flirting with fascism." Also adopting the rhetoric of the far left, GOP Chairman Richard Bond claimed the only difference between Buchanan and David Duke was their attire. (Duke wore white sheets while Buchanan wore fancy suits.) Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich agreed, charging that Buchanan was "closer to David Duke" than to "normal mainstream conservatism." Bush spokesman Marlin Fitzwater claimed Buchanan's speeches were laced with "code words," and called him "a bully." *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd went so far as to claim that Buchanan had once written "a column praising Adolf Hitler."

The purpose was not merely to chase GOP voters away from Buchanan but to delegitimize the entire viewpoint he represented. The reasons for the smears were strategic and cultural rather than tactical and expedient. Scotchie quotes *Chronicles* contributing editor Samuel Francis:

> [T]he authors of those mendacities had perceived some quality in the Buchanan movement that disturbed them more than usual. What they perceived was . . . the emergence of a new identity in American politics, one that the high science of managed and manipulated democracy is not yet quite prepared to handle and which is therefore more of a threat to the established powers than almost any previous challenge from the castrati of right and left.

Buchanan called the new identity born of that campaign a "conservatism of the heart": a conservatism that actually sought to conserve something real—namely, the jobs and neighborhoods of American workers who were being impoverished by free trade and global capitalism. Buchanan had also called for an end to Bush's "New World Order," pledging to withdraw American troops from their imperial outposts in Korea, Germany, and Japan—hardly evidence of incipient fascism.

Buchanan's was an America-first platform that wedded an old-republic patriotism with concern for the economic welfare of middle-class Americans and a vigorous defense of their culture and values from assaults by cosmopolitan elites in the media, academia, and politics. It was a union of the most potent appeals normally used separately by Democrats and Republicans in opposition to each other. In Buchanan's expert speechwriter's hands, the uniting of concern for working-class economic interests with a vigorous defense of traditional cultural values threatened to wreck the two-party scam in which antitraditionalist Democrats pretended to care about workers and big-business Republicans pretended to care

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about social and moral issues.

Two presidential campaigns later, however, the Buchanan movement appeared to have spent itself, dissolving in the dismal results of the Reform Party campaign of 2000. With no Buchanan disciples now holding office or party posts, it seems fair to ask: Is the movement really exhausted, and, if so, should we assess Buchanan's political impact?

Scotchie, maintaining some distance, provides a cordial and accurate recounting of Buchanan's political life. Although he does not shy away from discussing arguments sparked by some of Buchanan's political decisions—such as his controversial selection of Ezola Foster as his running mate in 2000—Scotchie, perhaps wisely, avoids any assessment of them. After all, Buchanan is still rocking the cosmopolitans' boat, most recently through his magazine, the *American Conservative*. And we do not yet know whether some young member of the Buchanan Brigades will one day appear in Congress or in some other leadership position on the American right.

We can, however, evaluate the impact of some conservative figures—William F. Buckley, Jr., for example—and seek comparisons. Buckley's magazine, *National Review*, and books (*God and Man at Yale*, *Up From Liberalism*, *etc.*) helped launch modern American conservatism as well as the 1964 Goldwater campaign that produced a generation of conservative activists. Could the repercussions of the Buchanan movement be analogous to the events that followed in Buckley's wake? If so, that might provide grounds for optimism.

Given the temper of today's political warfare between paleoconservatives and neoconservatives and the nature of the threat to the American people—which changed from communism abroad to cultural Marxism at home—Buckley-Goldwater conservatism may well be dead, having rendered itself harmless to an increasingly multiculturalist cosmopolitan establishment by merging with the now-globalist Republican Party.

Yet Buchanan's candidacies and the wide reception of his books reveal that the spirit of resistance that characterized some of early Buckley-Goldwater conservatism still lives, even though no Buckley-Goldwater conservative could have written *The Death of the West*. Thus, a new postconservative right may be emerging—thanks, in no small measure, to Patrick Buchanan.

Like Buckley before him, Buchanan's political trajectory includes writing politically charged (though more serious and significant) books, especially the best-selling *Death of the West*, and founding a magazine. *The Great Betrayal* and *A Republic, Not an Empire* (also a best-seller) are substantiative historical investigations that provide the philosophical context and factual basc for Buchanan's—and, perhaps, a postconservative—challenge to the global-capitalist establishment. Also like Buckley, who helped found Young Americans for Freedom to propagate his conservatism, Buchanan founded the American Cause, which sponsors conferences on themes important in the post-conservative era. (The most recent meeting examined mass immigration, which GOP conservatives have joined the far left in defending.)

Whether his impact will be seen as lasting or ephemeral, Buchanan undertook political tasks that no one else was willing to do at the time, tasks that had to be accomplished in some fashion if the American right was to survive assaults by globalists and immigrationists parading as standard-bearers of American culture and values. Today, Buchanan remains the right's liveliest and most quotable writer and is certainly among the most courageous. Even after the ignominious results of his 2000 presidential run, Buchanan published a runaway best-selling book, founded a magazine, and is still fighting—all testimony to his remarkable resilience. It is arguable that Pat Buchanan has done more for the American right than any other figure, but with far less popular acknowledgment. Ultimately, however, how he is seen in the future will depend less on the content of those rather solid accomplishments than on the objective political and cultural conditions that follow.

An assessment now would simply be too early. In the interim, Scotchie's biography provides a politically accurate history of the events influencing Buchanan and the events Buchanan hoped to influence. Joseph Scotchie has the journalist's flair for capturing the essential details without including the extraneous ones, while bringing forgotten controversies back to life. Students of contemporary politics will need this book if they intend to understand the controversies and conflicts of the 90's and perhaps glimpse the origins of an as-yet-unseen postconservatism.

Jerry Woodruff was communications director for Pat Buchanan's 1992 presidential campaign and is the editor of Middle American News.

Cooper Tightening Staves on a Barrel

—ca. 1848-52—

after the painting by J.-F. Millet (1814-75)

by David Middleton

His mallet raised again to strike a wedge
Forcing stretched vine-hoops down to brace the staves
And make oak barrels watertight for wine,
The cooper finds the rhythm of his craft.

The barrel rises higher than his eyes
That stare through his own cast shadow at the task
As though he nailed a silhouette on wood:
His artisan's blue tunic black with blood.

The worker and his work are all but one,
Descended from Burgundian books of hours
Through almanacs to picture magazines,
An emblem of September's ripened vines

For him who by the strokes of his poised brush
Raised up this mallet made of ink and oil
While wine-drunk craftsmen, come from Gothic stone,
Staggered across the Paris barricades.

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by Samuel Francis

The Old Right Failure

No sooner had at least a dozen or so counterattacks on David Frum's silly rant against paleoconservatives in the April 7 issue of *National Review* appeared in print or on the internet than the sole defense of the Frum article of which I am aware popped up under the name of William Rusher. Some paleos were willing to bet that the author was not the real William Rusher, onetime publisher of *National Review* and always respected as one of the magazine's stalwarts against the tendencies of some of its other editors to wobble ideologically; alas, those who made such wagers soon parted with their money. In attempting to understand why this elder statesman of the American right, now retired and living in San Francisco, had embraced (so to speak) Mr. Frum, most readers seemed to conclude that his elderliness had gotten the better of his statesmanship. Nowhere in his column did Mr. Rusher bother to notice that not everyone on the right agreed with Mr. Frum, let alone that a small library had already been written rejecting his claims.

The truth is that Mr. Rusher, however flawed his reasoning in his column, shows little sign of senility or decrepitude. The more likely explanation of why this warrior of the Old Right was so quick to clamber into bed with neoconservatives who despise and reject most of what he spent his career defending has to do with the flaws of the Old Right itself. Perhaps that political and intellectual movement was born senile, but, for all the complaints, criticisms, and conspiracy theories from paleoconservatives about how the neocons took over the conservative movement, no small part of the blame for their victory must lie at the feet of the Old Right itself.

Paleoconservatism and the Old Right are not the same thing, a point Mr. Frum in his article somewhat grasped but more than somewhat misunderstood. Paleoconservatism is a movement initiated and led by conservatives who, as individuals, generally were part of and came out of the Old Right but who, as they began to form a new identity under a new label in the late 1980's, eventually came to differ with certain themes and values of the Old Right while, at the same time, accepting others. By the dawn of the 1990's, paleoconservatism had essentially graduated from what was left of the old conservative movement of the 1950's and 60's, had mounted a powerful critique of neoconservatism, and possessed both a capable phalanx of writers and thinkers centered around this magazine and a highly articulate, nationally known political ally in Pat Buchanan. While it remained on friendly terms and even collaborated with the Old Right, paleoconservatism increasingly distinguished itself from that body of ideas.

If there is one major difference between the Old Right and paleoconservatism, it probably lies in the inherent radicalism of the latter, a trait that causes disquiet among some Old Right adherents, and the . . . well . . . "conservatism" of the former.

Paleoconservatism can be defined as a body of thought that identifies with and defends what paleos call the "Old Republic"—not just the kind of government but the kind of society, economy, and culture that flourished (or is said to have flourished; whether it was an historical reality rather than a convenient myth is not, at the moment, important) before the American Civil War and, in a wounded condition, managed to endure until overthrown in the wake of the two world wars, the Depression, and the emergence of a mammoth federal government fused with equally mammoth corporations, unions, universities, media, and other mass social, political, and cultural organizations—in short, the managerial revolution that Old Right theorist James Burnham analyzed.

The premise of paleoconservatism, in other words, is that the Old Republic no longer exists and that the revolution against it, the traditional identity of the American order, has already occurred—not (as neoconservatives believe) that a gang of New Leftists or communists are planning a revolution some time in the future. In this premise, the paleos are in agreement with the anti-interventionist classical liberal Garet Garrett, who wrote in his 1938 monograph, *The Revolution Was*,

> There are those who still think they are holding the pass against a revolution that may be coming up the road. But they are gazing in the wrong direction. The revolution is behind them. It went by in the Night of Depression, singing songs to freedom.

That does not seem to have been the premise of the Old Right, which, taking Edmund Burke as one of its principal icons, emulated Burke in formulating what was essentially a defense of an existing order. To the Old Right, post-World War II America was analogous to the old regime that Burke defended against the French Revolution and Enlightenment. It was a prerevolutionary order continuous with the traditional identity of the United States and the West, and, for the most part, the Old Right envisioned itself as "holding the pass against a revolution that may be coming up the road." In theory, of course, many of the Old Right saw that this claim was untrue—Richard Weaver and the Southern Agrarians, in particular, were fairly explicit in their rejection of the modern, secularized, materialistic, and basically repressive regime that had triumphed in the United States—but most Old Rightists (even most "traditionalists," let alone the "fusionists" and libertarians) in practice were perfectly content with the Republican Party, the fake "free enterprise" of a highly regulated managerial capitalism based on mass production and consumption, and the planned and plastic "culture"—ugly, vulgar, and increasingly vicious—that came to prevail in the country by the 1950's.

As long as television served up rigged quiz shows and "family-oriented" sit-coms in which the father was the eternal butt of ridicule and rebellion from his wife, children, and neighbors, most Old Rightists were perfectly happy to claim that mod-

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ern America was the same country, with the same government and the same civilization, as the land of Jefferson and Adams, Hawthorne and Melville, Webster and Calhoun. What the real Edmund Burke would have thought of the New America should have been obvious enough, but, whenever the odd Old Rightist tried to explain this to his "movement" colleagues, he was usually muzzled or purged.

National Review, despite its articulation of a body of conservative thought that logically should have been hammering away at the intellectual and institutional foundations of the regime, was in the forefront of the defense of the new order. With the emergence of the anti-Vietnam War movement and the New Left, which mounted an attack on American society from the opposite ideological direction, the Old Right around *National Review* rolled over on its belly and wrapped itself in the defense of Lyndon Johnson's ill-conceived war and the "system" of the bureaucratized mass culture that the New Left assaulted. In doing so, the Old Right and the mainstream conservatism it led were coopted into supporting the very regime their professed ideology should have resisted, and, from that process of cooptation, alliance with, and eventual deference to, the neoconservatism then emerging was only a short march.

In many respects, the Old Right could have done little else. What was later called "Middle American Radicalism" had not yet emerged in the 1950's, and, while the McCarthy movement can be seen as its forerunner, the Old Right had little attraction to or understanding of the radical implications of McCarthyite populism and antiestablishment sentiment. Lacking a mass base or following and consisting mainly of a small band of intellectuals, writers, and academics, the Old Right had little choice but to seek converts within the dominant intelligentsia of the system. As George H. Nash notes in his history of the conservative intellectual movement, William F. Buckley, Jr.,

> forcefully rejected what he called "the popular and cliché-ridden appeal to the grass-roots" and strove instead to establish a journal which would reach intellectuals. Not all conservatives agreed with this approach, but the young editor-to-be was firm. It was the intellectuals, after all, "who have midwived and implemented the revolution. We have got to have allies among the intellectuals, and we propose to renovate conservatism and see if we can't win some of them around."

James Burnham also seems to have supported this strategy rather than its alternative of mobilizing grassroots resistance to the new regime, and the strategy that Buckley and Burnham adopted is probably what led to the magazine's constant purges of (mainly grassroots) movements that could have built up an alternative culture able to resist and challenge the dominant one that managerial liberalism imposed. Not until the late 1960's did Burnham begin to see that no "alliance" with or conversion of the intellectuals was possible and that "the broad middle mass of people who do the work" were the natural alternative to the incumbent ruling class. Mr. Buckley, alas, seems never to have seen this, and his entire career has been one long lurch from one failed alliance with his favorite leftist of the hour to another and a series of ideological purges that would have made Lavrenty Beria envious.

The purge victims were mainly those natural allies on the political right that made *National Review*'s allies on the left nervous—the John Birch Society, the Ayn Rand cult, and (everybody's perennial favorite) the antisemites (some of whom really were antisemitic). Eventually, Mr. Buckley got around to purging the paleos, actually before the paleos even appeared and while a good many of them were still writing for his magazine, and probably the main reason for their purge was that the paleos really took seriously the ideas and values that *National Review* and most of its founding editors preached, minus the heavy doses of GOP boosterism, business conservatism, and the mythology of Economic Man that was seldom far from the *National Review* mind.

I have never met a paleo who actually believed that real restoration of the Old Republic was possible, but most continue to take it as the ideal against which the existing political and cultural realities in America should be measured and toward which a seriously radical conservatism should aspire. That means that most paleos reject the mass produce-and-consume economy of managerial capitalism that subverts cultural identity and turns what were once the independent businessmen and farmers of the Old Republic into proletarians dependent on mass companies, factories, unions, and markets beyond their control, as well as the mass immigration beloved of neocons and libertarians and calmly ignored by the dwindling band of the Old Right. As paleoconservative Joseph Scotchie writes in his recent book on the movement, America "was intended by the Founding Fathers to be an Anglo-Saxon Celtic nation also influenced by Athens, Rome, and Jerusalem." Taking the ideas and values of the classical conservatism of Russell Kirk, James Burnham, M.E. Bradford, Robert Nisbet, and Richard Weaver (to name a few of the best and brightest of the Old Right) more seriously than most on the Old Right ever did, paleoconservatism is, in fact, a far more revolutionary creed than anything the potbellied grad students of the New Left ever concocted. Indeed, the New Left's much-vaunted "revolution" was as fake as the conservatism of the neocons; both merely offer to perpetuate and enhance the power of the managerial system and its engineered destruction of traditional institutions and identities. A term far more appropriate than the clumsy *paleoconservatism* would be *radical conservatism—radical*, because it demands radical changes in social and political arrangements and a revolutionary redistribution of power in favor of self-governing citizens; *conservative*, because it issues these demands from the perspective of traditional Euro-American conservatism.

Given their own fairly conventional conservative assumptions and predilections, the Old Right has generally found paleoconservatism unsettling, but, even when they have sympathized with it, most Old Rightists were still far too frightened to raise their voices against neoconservative infiltration and the looming destruction of the conservative movement. I have known a dozen Old Right conservative leaders of one variety or another who understood clearly what the neocons were up to, but not one had the spine to speak out or publish any criticism of them. It is because of their cowardice that the right in this country is in its present desperate condition. It would be surprising if such elder statesmen of the Old Right as William Rusher did see through characters like David Frum and his cronies today. It was precisely because of their shallowness and their timidity that neoconservatism pulled off its revolution at all. c

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by Scott P. Richert

Giving the Devil His Due

Early in the morning factory whistle blows,
Man rises from bed and puts on his clothes,
Man takes his lunch, walks out in the morning light,
It's the working, the working, just the working life . . .

One of the oddest ironies of our postindustrial age is that conservatives—true conservatives, not the various utopian progressivists who call themselves by that name—find themselves defending the remnants of the industrial system, the onset of which their intellectual and spiritual forebears viewed with dread. It is not that the crazy mystic William Blake was wrong when he wrote of the destruction of the English countryside by "these dark satanic mills"; still less Robert Burns, in his "Impromptu on Carron Iron Works":

We cam na here to view your warks,
In hopes to be mair wise,
But only, lest we gang to hell,
It may be nae surprise . . .

Rather, conservatives, knowing that Jacobin optimism is more dangerous politically (and, possibly, even more destructive spiritually) than despair (you can, after all, repent of despair), see all too clearly that, whatever the damage wrought by industrialism, the emerging postindustrial "service" or "technology" economy bodes far worse for society.

Through the mansions of fear, through the mansions of pain,
I see my daddy walking through those factory gates in the rain,
Factory takes his hearing, factory gives him life,
The working, the working, just the working life . . .

"Factory gives him life": Can the same be said of the job at Wal-Mart or McDonald's or even the relatively high-paying technology positions at WorldCom or Enron? Libertarians and neoconservatives may long for the day when subsistence farming and manual labor disappear completely from the American scene, but what kind of a life can you build for your family if your continued employment—let alone the continued existence of your employer—is always in doubt?

These questions have an added urgency here in Rockford, now that Ingersoll Milling Machine has closed its doors after 112 years and filed for bankruptcy, and one of the largest private employers, Hamilton Sundstrand, is sending signals (perhaps unintentionally) that the days of its factory in southeast Rockford are numbered. (After months of negotiations, Sundstrand's management gave the union less than a day to examine a six-inch-thick contract proposal; when the union asked for more time to examine the details, Sundstrand locked the employees out.)

Shortly after Ingersoll gave its 300 employees two hours to clear out and locked its doors forever, the local Gannett paper's token Republican columnist opined that "Some doomsayers will predict that Ingersoll's failure signals the end of manufacturing in the Rock River Valley." I'll take the bait: Yes, manufacturing is leaving Rockford—20 percent of local manufacturing jobs have been lost over the past three years. And, unlike in my hometown in Michigan—which, in the recession of the early 1980's— successfully exploited its access to Lake Michigan to move to a tourist economy, nothing is replacing it: Unemployment in Rockford is back in double digits—its highest rate since that earlier recession. Rockford is more like Flint, post-GM, struggling to avoid bankruptcy. The major difference is that the political, media, and civic leaders in Flint acknowledge the problem.

When Bruce Springsteen wrote the final verse of "Factory," he was describing the pain and anger of men who would return to their jobs the next morning, when the factory whistle blew once again:

End of the day, factory whistle cries,
Men walk through these gates with death in their eyes,
And you just better believe boy,
somebody's gonna get hurt tonight
It's the working, the working, just the working life.

That pain and anger, however, is nothing compared to the social disruption caused by the loss of those jobs. Over the past year, I've watched marriages end—good marriages, loving marriages, with young children—as the financial strain of unemployment, compounded by the loss of healthcare just when it is needed most, pulls families apart. Homes are lost, and the financial effects of factory closings cascade through the local economy as small businesses—from sandwich shops to metal-working and packaging plants—find themselves without customers. What does a father do when he can't find a new job within six months, or nine months, or a year? He can "retrain" in one of the "hot new fields," the democratic capitalist replies—but that assumes that companies in those fields are opening up in Rockford. (They aren't.) Then he can uproot his family and move where the action is, the libertarian smugly answers. (The market has spoken.) But at what cost to his family and to Rockford? And where? And when his family arrives in the Promised Land, what guarantee will the father have that his new job won't head south, or to China, or to India?

Yes, life involves certain risks, and most of us are here in the United States because our ancestors suffered similar economic "dislocations," but there is a difference in kind, not simply in degree, between the farmer in 1832 who left one subsistence existence in Alsace for another in the fertile fields of Southern Indiana and the engineer in Rockford in 2003 who may eventually—and, in all likelihood, far from his hometown—find work that will pay him wages that the subsistence farmer would never see. After all, that engineer will always know the uncertainty that comes from earning your livelihood at the mercy of another man.

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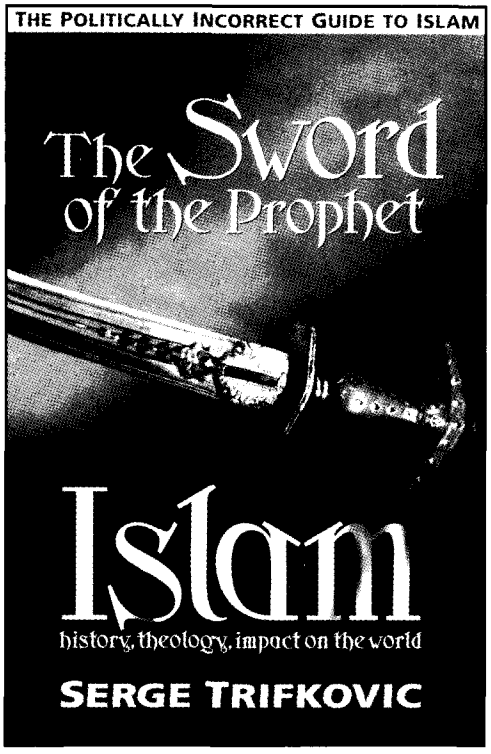
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Letter From Paris

by Curtis Cate

How Anti-American Are the French?

◆

It is an old truism, so ancient that it can probably be traced as far back as Aristotle, that politics is not an exact science. Indeed, we could say of it what Napoleon, who knew a thing or two about politics, once said with admirable concision of the Art of War: that it is "*tout d'exécution*"—entirely a matter of execution. What counts, decisively, is not what politicians say but what they do. But, not being free agents—a truly free human being has never existed—they must, to be successful, adapt themselves to circumstances; and circumstances have a stubborn way of not obeying the whims of those who assume the right to command them.

The recent tiff between bicentenary allies France and the United States over the attitude that each should adopt toward the Iraq of Saddam Hussein offers—or, perhaps I should say, will one day offer—a classic example of how politicians make things more difficult for themselves and others by pursuing a preset course of action on the assumption that, no matter what the outcome might be, they are in the right and those who dare to disagree with them are in the wrong. Being persuaded that one is right is, of course, something absolutely visceral, subintellectual, in every human being—the search for certainty being, as Nietzsche so penetratingly understood, the very essence of the human condition. But the fact remains that this certitude of being right, of being the possessor of "the truth"—not to say, when dangerously magnified, "the Truth"—is an egotistical prejudice, one which thoughtful people strive to combat by reading the Socratic dialogues of Plato.

The recent battle of wits and wills fought out between George W. Bush and Jacques Chirac was essentially a clash of contending egos. Nothing indeed could have more pathetically illustrated the selfish nature of this clash of wills than the determination of the apparent victor, George W. Bush, and of his closest advisors, even including his ambivalent secretary of state, Colin Powell, to *punish* France and the French for having dared to contest the geopolitical wisdom of the President of the United States.

The dramatic personalization of the conflict of opinions between the leaders of the United States and France has obscured the fact that negative sentiments about the unilateral "brutality of the Bush team"—as Hubert Védrines, the former Socialist foreign minister put it on April 24—have been even more categorically expressed in other European countries. An opinion poll organized by an ITOGI TV weekly review in Moscow shortly after the start of the war in Iraq revealed that 80 percent of Russia's intelligentsia not only disapproved of the American invasion but were even hoping that Saddam Hussein would deal the invaders an humiliating defeat.

To the best of my knowledge, no similar poll has yet been undertaken in France, where intellectuals have recently been subjected to considerable criticism, perhaps because the French do not really need an "intelligentsia," being, almost by definition, a nation of thinkers, according to the celebrated Cartesian credo, *Cogito, ergo sum*, and Pascal's famous definition of man as a "thinking reed." As the French humorist Pierre Daninos noted years ago: "In England an imbecile is simply an imbecile; in France he is an imbecile who reasons."

I doubt that as high a proportion of French intellectuals would have been willing to back Saddam Hussein. What is certain, thanks to an opinion poll undertaken in late March by France's leading television channel, TF1, and the afternoon daily, *Le Monde*, is that 78 percent of those interviewed declared themselves opposed to the war in Iraq, while only 17 percent were for it; 65 percent believed that the United States was responsible for provoking hostilities, and only 34 percent were more or less favorably disposed toward the war aims of the United States and Great Britain. A bare majority of those polled (53 percent) actually favored an "Allied" victory, while 33 percent wanted Saddam Hussein's Iraq to win! Jacques Chirac's antiwar stance was massively approved, particularly and paradoxically among "left-wing" voters (normally opposed to his supposedly "conservative" policies at home), the level of approval even exceeding 90 percent for several weeks.

In Spain, where anti-American sentiment enjoys even greater support—the Iberian ego still being ruffled by the humiliating defeats of 1898—92 percent of those interviewed for Madrid's *El País* in late March declared themselves opposed to the war in Iraq; 78 percent believed that it was "illegal"; 88 percent, that it was unfair (given America's crushing military superiority); and 44 percent were persuaded that the real American motive for invading Iraq was to lay hands on her petroleum resources. The Italians, for their part—and this notwithstanding the pro-war approval of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi—outdid the Spaniards in their condemnation of the war, invariably topping the 90-percent level in polls.

Statistics, as is well known, provide the bare bones of any sociopolitical situation. Of more interest is the vital flesh and blood of individual opinions, of individual protests. By early April, something utterly incredible seemed to be taking place in France—this Gallic land of proud diversity, whose ruggedly individualistic farmers have managed to invent more than 250 different kinds of cheese. For once, the French seemed to be speaking with one voice—a voice sternly condemning American "unilateralism," the Bush administration's vision of a world regimented by a new, God-blessed and God-sanctioned hyperpower, ready and able to impose its postmodern solutions wherever evil might seem to be raising its ugly head.

In a fascinating article published in *Le Monde*, Bruno Latour, a French professor of sociology who had been giving lectures on the history of science at Harvard, expressed the dismay he had felt after returning to France to discover how suddenly univocal his homeland had become. "The American media," he wrote,

> are divided, the French media almost unanimous. Every day, on the other side of the Atlantic, incisive and vengeful editorials, anxious and aggressive TV panels, vehement demonstrations have for the past two months debated the wisdom and risks of the war in Iraq. In France it seems that the most

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disputatious nation on earth has at last found a common cause: "We are all Chiraquians" has replaced the famous "We are all Americans" of Jean-Pierre Colombani [words written in a *Le Monde* editorial in the immediate aftermath of the September 11, 2001, assault on Manhattan's World Trade Center].

Latour's conclusion, on the basis of what he had seen on French television and read in the newspapers, was that

> from a legitimate critique of a gang of adventurers [*i.e.*, Bush and Company] we have slipped towards the abandonment of our alliances . . .
>
> French quasi-unanimity may perhaps derive from another source . . . the progressive replacement of political discourse by moral posturing . . . Having partly abandoned our sovereignty without having recovered it as a simple part of a Europe that does not yet exist—and which, because of the present crisis, may never exist—we are hemmed in between two forms of public discourse: the old one, based on sovereignty and which accepted the risks involved, and a purely moral one, whose sole principle of reality is that of virtue, since we have thrust upon others the job of defining relationships of strength.

In the same issue of *Le Monde* (April 5), André Glucksmann—along with the more flamboyant Bernard-Henri Lévy, one of the "new philosophers" who bravely took up the cudgels for Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn in the early 1970's—caustically ridiculed the "pacifism" of the new unholy alliance of antiwarmongers:

> France-Germany-Russia-China-Syria—the "*camp of peace*" intones the great hymn of "*law*" against force. Moscow walks off with the kettle-drum prize of hypocrisy, as the only state today able to boast of having totally levelled a capital. Peking ransacks Tibet. Syria occupies Lebanon. Jolly company, which under the appellation of "*international law*" glorifies a state's unlimited right to act as it pleases on its lands . . . Reduced to a principle of absolute sovereignty, "international law" in effect grants Saddam permission to poison-gas his own people, Putin to transform "anti-terrorist operations" in the Caucasus into genocide. And why, retrospectively, not grant to the Hutus—who form the majority in Rwanda—the right to exterminate the Tutsis? . . .
>
> For the first time the West-West rift is cleaving world politics, threatening the construction of Europe, ruining NATO, and paralyzing international organizations. Stereotypes are flourishing in clusters. Illiterate, cowboy-minded, fanatically religious and pragmatically cynical, governed by a sparrow-brain and a clan of falcons, America, full of childish idealism, thirsts for oil. It is a hegemony in full expansion, an empire in the final stages of decadence . . . Never mind the contradictory arguments. Bush is Danger number 1, and Saddam, no matter how deadly he may be allowed to seem, is fiddlesticks.

Long before these disabused lines were written by an "humanitarian" idealist who does not pull his punches, a number of less incandescent observers were beginning to worry over the increasingly intransigent "No war, no matter what!" attitude of Jacques Chirac and his excessively dynamic, globe-trotting minister of foreign affairs, Dominique de Villepin. "Aren't they perhaps overdoing it?" was the provocative question raised on a cover of Claude Imbert's *Le Point* weekly. A number of French parliamentarians belonging to the recently created UMP (Union pour la Majorité présidentielle), a kind of umbrella organization of neo-Gaullist, non-Gaullist, and even anti-Gaullist politicians that was hastily put together last year by former prime minister Alain Juppé to provide Jacques Chirac with a solid parliamentary majority, began to feel misgivings over the anti-American "drift" in French diplomacy, now so marked that it was encouraging French Muslims, anarchists, a variety of left-wing hotheads, as well as nationalistic and antisemitic extremists of the far right to take part in street demonstrations denouncing the warmonger Bush and praising the peace-loving Saddam Hussein. One of these parliamentarians was Pierre Lelouche, generally regarded as the UMP's leading military strategist. In an article published in *Le Figaro*, he and five other National Assembly deputies recalled how isolated they had felt in the midst of the irrational antiwar fever that had suddenly gripped France and how vain had been their warnings against the pursuit of an excessively dogmatic diplomacy that was likely to be counterproductive.

> We also said that by declaring in advance that in all circumstances we rejected war, we could only encourage Saddam Hussein to continue to play for time. We said that such an attitude would not prevent the war, but would inevitably lead to its being conducted outside the framework of the UN: the exact opposite of the aim pursued by French diplomacy. For having taken this stand, a very solitary one at that, for having reminded people of the million deaths caused by Saddam Hussein himself, we were regarded at times as "Atlanticists," at others as partisans of an abominable "war-camp." The war once started, we witnessed an incredible wave of disinformation wash over the country, aimed at making France the herald of the "camp of peace," over and against the inhuman actions of the Americans and the British. We saw the streets of Paris fill up with Iraqi banners, to cries of "*Vive Saddam, mort aux Juifs.*"
>
> We saw our diplomacy, yesterday based on national independence but also solidarity with our allies, caricatured as being a form of neutrality tinged with pacifism and stale whiffs of anti-Americanism. To our great shame we saw one third of the French, in public-opinion polls, hope for a Saddam victory, and still others profane in particularly sordid conditions the military cemetery of Etaples, in northern France.
>
> Fortunately, a salutary halt was called to such excesses. The President of the Republic wrote to Queen Elisabeth to tell her of the debt France owed to British soldiers fallen on our soil . . .

One week later (April 15), André Glucksmann returned to the attack, joined by novelist Pascal Bruckner (a lucid observer of the United States) and film director Romain Goupil. In *Le Monde*, they deplored the hysteria that had gripped France

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and its finest minds, welding 90 percent of them into a "quasi Soviet atmosphere" of "collective intoxication." Among other examples of narrow intolerance, they cited the scandalous example ("of a rare obscenity") of a famous French singer angrily getting up and stalking off the stage of a TV variety show because the producer had chosen to include an anti-Saddam film director among the guests.

> One is forced to admit that anti-Americanism is not a circumstantial accident or simple reticence concerning the administration in Washington, but the credo of a policy which welds people together, despite their divergences: the National Front and the Greens, socialists and conservatives, communists, sovereigntists . . . On the right, as on the left, rare have been those who have not yielded to this *nationalism of imbeciles*, which is always a symptom of resentment and decline.

How anti-American are the French? Stated in such bald terms, the question is virtually unanswerable. The answer, moreover, varies from one week to the next; for nothing, except perhaps fashion, is more intrinsically volatile than an opinion publicly expressed. The question is even misleading, not to say misled, for it assumes that the French, a nation of dogmatists, are constant in their likes and dislikes, in their personal antipathies. Take a specific example: those who, for philosophical reasons, should logically be anti-American. The number of extreme right-wing royalists, who despise republics as well as revolutions and whose philosophical mentors are Joseph de Maistre, Louis de Bonald, and, closer to modern times, Charles Maurras, probably do not exceed, or even reach, one percent of the total population of France (roughly 60 million souls)—and even they (I have known some of them) are not necessarily anti-American. Far more numerous are the extremists of the left—which, in France, include half a dozen Trotskyist, neoanarchistic, crazily utopian factions whose vociferous complaints and anti-establishment rhetoric helped to fissure the Socialist government's so-called "plural majority" and, thus, to destroy Prime Minister Lionel Jospin during the fateful first round of last year's presidential elections. But this does not mean that all of them are, for ideological reasons, viscerally anti-American. Many of them drink Coca-Cola, enjoy jazz and rap music, and even smoke American cigarettes.

This is even truer of the hodge-podge legion of malcontents—everything from stevedores, textile workers, disgruntled peasants, hard-pressed artisans and small-enterprise managers, frightened housewives and exasperated husbands (worried about suburban and even urban insecurity), butchers, bakers, bankers, and even lawyers—who voted for that consummate rabble-rouser, ultranationalist, and Chirac-hater, Jean-Marie Le Pen, whose anti-American outbursts have varied wildly, depending on the way in which he is being treated by American publications and TV. (A classic example of what deserves to be called "pictorial vilification" was *Time*'s cover story, in which this fair-haired Breton was made vaguely to resemble Adolf Hitler.) Many, if not most, of the 17 percent of the electorate who voted for this superpatriotic demagogue during that crucial first round of the election were registering a vote of protest, were voting less *for* Le Pen than voting *against* the all-too-familiar, slick, business-as-usual "operators" of the French parliamentary system.

In May 2002, the SOFRES (one of France's leading public-opinion pulse-takers) conducted a poll, which revealed that only ten percent of those interviewed felt real antipathy toward the United States. From this, historian Michel Winock concluded that anti-Americanism in France was not a "popular sentiment" but a characteristic "of a certain part of the elite."

Stated slightly differently, for certain French intellectuals and others, expressing doubts about the United States and anti-American sentiments has long been a fashionable way of proclaiming one's commendably progressive, anticapitalist sentiments. During the war years of 1941-45, which he spent in New York working for Elmer David's OWI (Office of War Information), the famous French surrealist author André Breton used to spend a lot of time inveighing against the United States and darkly predicting that she would, after the defeat of Nazism, become an intolerant, fascist country.

In his exhaustive book on this subject, *L'obsession anti-américaine*—which also covers anti-Americanism in countries besides France—Jean-François Revel cites the pertinent case of Hubert Beuve-Méry, who, shortly after the liberation of France, decided to found a left-wing Christian newspaper called *Le Monde*. Even before he could achieve this ambition, he wrote in May 1944:

> The Americans constitute a veritable danger for France. A danger quite different from the one that Germany threatens and with which the Russians could eventually threaten us . . . The Americans can prevent us from carrying out a necessary revolution, and their materialism does not even have the tragic grandeur of the materialism of the totalitarians. If they retain a veritable cult for the idea of Liberty, they do not feel the need to free themselves from the servitude of capitalism.

This idea that it should be the global mission of France—the homeland of the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man—to uphold not only revolutionary but nonmaterialistic and anticapitalist ideals has persisted down to the present. The nationalism of Charles de Gaulle was simply one of its metamorphic variations; we should never forget that his long-term aim was to transcend the "contradictions" of capitalism through a state-sponsored "association" of workers and managers. The foremost champion of this view today is probably Regis Débray, a personal friend of François Mitterrand's wife, Danielle, who so admired Che Guevara that he traveled all the way to Bolivia to join his *guerrilleros* (and came close to losing his life in this adventure) and who recently surprised those who should have known better by turning into a latter-day Gaullist.

It is almost certainly no accident that, in addition to Jean-François Revel, who for years has been exposing and ridiculing the residual utopianism of France's left-wing intellectuals, it should be such anti-Soviet thinkers as André Glucksmann and Bernard-Henri Lévy who recently have been warning against the dangers of French anti-Americanism. Just as in the early 1970's, when they were bucking the tide of conventional pro-Soviet "neutrality"—the *ne plus ultra* summit of intellectual hypocrisy—so, today, they are bucking the tide of anti-American sneers, expressed in a hundred different ways, from the provocative "Iraq—a new Vietnam?" chosen as a cover for a weekend edition of the *Figaro Magazine* to the satirical *Canard enchaîné*'s front-page taunt that, in recently liberated Baghdad, "the Koran is coming back more quickly than electricity!"

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When, in the immediate wake of September 11, Jean-Pierre Colombani had the courage to write that "We are all of us Americans!" he was promptly confronted with a minirevolt from certain radical members of *Le Monde*'s staff. Much the same thing happened when Robert Hue, the gentle secretary general of what remains of the French Communist Party, proposed that a minute of silence pay tribute to those who had died in the cataclysmic crash of the World Trade Center. In this case, it would probably be an exaggeration to establish a strict cause-and-effect relationship; the fact remains, however, that the Communist Party's 3.4 percent vote in last year's presidential election was the lowest recorded since 1945.

Sensationalism, to parody Samuel Johnson, is the first refuge of a scoundrel. In July of last year—nine months after the cataclysmic event—a French "investigative" reporter named Thierry Meyssan produced what he thought was a journalistic blockbuster: an anthology piece of anti-American debunking. In a book entitled *11 Septembre 2001—L'effroyable imposture* (*The Frightful Imposture*), he argued, against the overwhelming mass of visible evidence, that the bombing of the Pentagon on that fateful Tuesday was not the work of Al Qaeda fanatics but had, in reality, been engineered by the top brass in the Pentagon to provoke a national uproar, with vengeful calls for rapid military retaliation. What was surprising was not that the author was able to find a publisher for this grotesque fantasy but the anything-but-naive readiness of French radio and TV to offer this journalistic contraband a maximum of publicity. Overnight, it became a national bestseller.

It is too early to say exactly what will be the long-term consequences for the Middle East of the war in Iraq. No matter what the ultimate outcome may be, however, the French, in general, and Jacques Chirac, in particular, are likely to suffer. For, by assuming an excessively intransigent position, Chirac and his foreign minister, Dominique de Villepin, in effect maneuvered themselves into a no-win position. Should they be proved wrong in believing that George W. Bush and Tony Blair's war of aggression against Saddam Hussein and his iniquitous regime was certain to lead to further chaos in the Middle East—Chirac once said that "the last thing this region needs is another war"—they will wear the sorry look of stubborn gamblers who backed the wrong horse. On the other hand, should Chirac and his foreign minister be proved right, they are likely further to exasperate Bush and the war-loving hawks of his entourage for being made to look like a bull in a china shop. Nothing more exasperates a willful man than to be proved wrong.

To be proved right will not, furthermore, obscure the fact that, compared to the overwhelming military might of the United States, France is now a weakling—and, sad to say, almost of her own volition. For this, the Socialists, who, during mostly of the past 20 years, have misruled France, are largely to blame—most for having taught the French to be lazy and to believe that a truly "progressive" people should not have to work for more than 35 hours per week. It would probably be unfair to place the blame exclusively on the Socialists for having chosen to construct an ultramodern aircraft carrier—proudly named the *Charles de Gaulle*—that was such a marvel of state-of-the-art technology that it could propel itself with only two, instead of the usual four, propellers. The extra strain imposed on them was such that, on its first trans-Atlantic voyage, one of the propellers broke, and the stricken vessel had to limp home for repairs. It has been pointed out by experts that, for the same construction costs, two more reliable aircraft carriers could have been built at the independent shipyards of St. Nazaire rather than at the state-controlled Arsenal of Brest, which won the contract because of the influence wielded on a leftist government by the Arsenal's communist trade union.

What, more than anything else, has catapulted the United States to her exalted elevation as this planet's one and only superpower has been the enormous sums Americans have been willing to invest in scientific and technological research. The recent war in Iraq was, above all, a triumph of military technology. And what is alarming for Europe in general, and France in particular, is that, notwithstanding the economic success of the euro, the "superiority gap" between Europe and the United States has, in scientific and military matters, been inexorably increasing. France today spends five times less per capita on scientific research than the United States, and she has even sunk to 13th place compared to her European neighbors. Yet, dead to the repeated protests and warnings of hundreds of France's worried scientists—the Nobel Prize-winning biologist, François Jacob, has even spoken of a course of "national suicide"—the conservative Chirac-Raffarin government has chosen to reduce investments (as much as 50 percent) in the vital field of scientific research.

The consequence of such a shortsighted policy can only be to accelerate a growing gap between French pretensions as a "world power" and its *de facto* decline. This is what André Glucksmann, Pascel Bruckner, and Romain Goupil meant when they referred to the symptoms of "resentment and decline" that lie at the root of French anti-Americanism. It is an unhealthy situation—and not only for the French. In the long run, it is as mentally warping for the French to resent American superiority as it is for Americans to despise the "inferior" French.

Curtis Cate, who was born in France, is the author of four biographies, the most recent devoted to Nietzsche.

Letter From London

by Andrei Navrozov

Caveat Emptor

◆

Like the flea-market buyer of an atomic clock that is supposed to keep perfect time until the year 8021 but breaks the next day, the poet player straddles the gnostic frontier between infinite skepticism and absolute faith. On the one hand, it appears that the buyer's skepticism is justified, because he's been swindled. *Look here, the stupid thing isn't working*! On the other hand, it appears that his faith is well placed, because the clock did work for a while and would've kept working if it hadn't been broken. Like any machine—which is to say, a product of lofty intellect that has found its way down into the context of lowly human striving—the world is indeed a hybrid, inviting of such dualism.

Thus, the poet player trusts in a woman's love but not the love of any woman he knows. He believes in the law but is instinctively sympathetic to the plight of just about every convicted criminal. He esteems the material luxuries that money can buy but scorns those who enjoy and consume them as much as he despises the society that produces and prices them. He is cognizant of the irreconcilable contradiction between individual liberty and

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social equality, which, however papered over with newsprint, makes a travesty of the modern political ideal labeled *democracy*. He knows, even as he greets the liveried lackey swinging open the massive Georgian doors to his purgatory of choice, that the exercise he is about to engage in is best described as "killing money," but he goes in all the same and relishes defeat on a par with victory.

My hero is a pure type, conjured up from a decade of playing roulette alongside him in London's gambling clubs, but it should not be supposed that, to embody this type (or, at any rate, many of its constituent characteristics), a man need play roulette or indeed ever enter a casino. I recently read a spectacularly honest account of a year in New York, published under the frivolous title *How to Lose Friends and Alienate People*, in which a young English journalist, Toby Young, anatomizes his brief stint at *Vanity Fair* and the snap rejection of his Fleet Street tissue by the social organism of this Hollywoodian megalopolis. "My total inability to maintain good relations with those in a position to help me had to be a *factor*," Young muses.

> I mean, I had hired a strippergram on Take Our Daughters to Work Day. You couldn't take that away from me. Unfortunately, even though I was aware of how self-destructive my behaviour was, I wasn't sure I could modify it in any way.

This is the poet player speaking, albeit in the newspaper hack's idiom, complete with the alienation, the fatalism, and the black humor born of the two. Young goes on to summon the ghosts of "penniless writers" of another era in American letters, as he quotes from Ben Hecht's memoir, *A Child of the Century*:

> Despite their wit and even talent, unsuccess was in their eyes. The need to be underdogs and rail against existence was as strong in them as their lust for fame and money. You could see it not only in their faces but hear it in the gloat with which they detailed their misfortunes.

"Was that my problem?" Young asks. "That I actually *preferred* being a loser?"

A similar glimpse of the poet player at large, without the condemned playground that is his idealized habitation, is found in *The Temptation to Exist*, the deservedly famous book by the Francophone Rumanian philosopher E.M. Cioran, where the author discusses the dilemma of the exiled litterateur, in large part his own dilemma. Torn from his roots and his language, thrust into a society that, to him, is as mute as it is hostile, Cioran's autobiographical subject begins to relish worldly failure—provided that it is total, inescapable, apocalyptic—far above worldly success, which is of necessity small or, rather, incremental and which he regards as episodic, ambiguous, and inadequate. In the context that is overtly worldly, corrupt, and possibly evil, phenomenal failure is purifying, calming, and oddly liberating, whereas success is hardly ever convincing enough to desire for its own sake.

What need, or indeed likelihood, of success, for instance, would there be for the European visitor to this, one of the nightmare worlds in Voltaire's *Candide*:

> Morocco was swimming in blood when we arrived. The fifty sons of the emperor Mulei-Ismael each had their faction, and there were fifty civil wars of blacks against blacks, blacks against tans, tans against tans, mulattoes against mulattoes. There was a continuous carnage throughout the empire.

European aristocracy, wrote the Russian philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev in *The Philosophy of Inequality* centuries later, is unlike modern democracy in that

> democracy is easily transformed into a formal tool for the organization of special interests, as the search for the best becomes the search for those who best serve these interests. Democracy is devoid of deeper, ontological content, and can therefore lend itself to any number of contradictory aims.

In other words, replace Voltaire's Morocco with New York, London, or Paris and the emperor's 50 sons with an equal number of global corporate chieftains—from the *New York Times* to Coca-Cola, from Mobil Oil to the CIA, from Yale to Hollywood—and you can easily understand why *noli me tangere* is the only commentary that anybody who truly loves the world can think of directing at the world he sees before him.

Thus, when my woebegone hero leaves the casino, $10,000 to the worse and without the cab fare, walking home at five o'clock in the morning by the garden squares of springtime Chelsea where, as if through an airport chapel's public-address system, astonishingly electric birds herald the advent of still another sunless dawn, his underlying sense of achievement is greater than even his secret nausea, his hopelessness, and his fatigue. He presses his forehead against a wrought-iron lamppost with its double C's raised in gilt, and, as he coughs, he notes that there is blood on the handkerchief. He is cleaned out, and, hence, he is now *clean*, just as the good Lord made 'im. He is a *total* wastrel and therefore not part of the human herd—petty scrapers and repugnant philistines the lot of them—an individual at a soul's remove, a maverick deserving of notice even if it be solely in his own maddened eyes. Doubtless, he is a failure, yet, doubtless also, he is *himself*.

If my hero had won, had won big, had won convincingly, he would have felt just the same, for a nobleman is a nobleman irrespective of whether he happens to be grandiosely rich or dirt poor. He, too, aspires to perfect equanimity in the face of crushing defeat, which is companion to perfect selflessness in victory. His winnings would not have been earned, any more than his losses are now deserved, and it is this, his life's first piercing revelation of the immanent wisdom of the compact between God and man, that is the poet player's defining moment. Is physical beauty ever deserved? Can genius be earned? Can any gift, talent, or virtue?

Perhaps that illumination is the first in a series of many. On cloudy mornings yet to come, as spring turns to summer, the poet player will press on with his dangerous travels within himself, striving to deepen his understanding of his own character against the dynamic backdrop of constant, yet perilously unexpected, numbers and their recurrent, yet always unprecedented, combinations. Thus he acquires nobility, paying for it as a man should, with his blood, his nerves, and his bile. Thus he acquires liberty, paying for it as a Christian, with ceaseless torment. Thus he acquires wisdom, paying for it as a gambler, with his own and other people's worthless money.

It is the wisdom that he eventually acquires that will prove his undoing.

Andrei Navrozov is Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

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Letter From Mexico

by Russell Gordon

American Impunity and Incompetence

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As the War on Terror drags on, it appears that immigration policy remains a constant, while its interpretation changes like spring fashions in Paris.

An Englishman once quipped that a diplomat's job is to lie for his country. Blunt truths aside, a diplomat's role might also be to further his nation's interests in—and manage relations with—his host country's government and citizens. This includes projecting a positive national image, handling citizen services, and facilitating commerce, dialogue, and travel. Some among the U.S. Diplomatic Corps seem unaware of these inherent responsibilities. Whereas the British have a long tradition of diplomacy in the Foreign Services, successive U.S. administrations have bestowed diplomatic posts for patronage—and, all too frequently, with provocative intent. An anti-Serb is named ambassador to Greece, an ex-POW is posted to Vietnam, and women are sent as senior U.S. representatives to Islamic countries. America does not want for enemies, and too many of them have become enemies because of her foreign policy.

My parents invited my girlfriend, Elizabeth Garci, a Mexican national, to celebrate the all-American holiday of Thanksgiving with us in Illinois. Elizabeth, a successful commercial photographer in Mexico City, could take a week off of her hectic assignment schedule to make the journey to get to know my family. I called U.S. Citizen Services at the U.S. embassy in Mexico City to inquire about the possibility of Elizabeth visiting. They said it should not pose a problem and that, if the consular officials thought the renewal of her expired visa would not come through by her travel date, a single-entrance pass would be issued during the interview.

Elizabeth arrived at the consulate on October 28 at 1:10 P.M. for her interview, scheduled for 1:30. She began the registration process at 2:00 (case no. 1693). During this process, Elizabeth handed in her current and previous Mexican passports and an application form, had her photograph taken, and was fingerprinted. She was interviewed by a U.S. consular officer from 3:10 to 3:15 P.M. She asked if she would receive a visa in time to make the journey; the officer replied, "First, we have to see if we're even going to *give* you the visa."

He then looked at his computer monitor and asked, "Who is Russell Gordon?" She responded that I am her boyfriend. Then—apparently the consulate has a direct link to the Mexican IRS's database—he asked, "Why don't you pay taxes?" Elizabeth explained that freelance artists who earn less than 500,000 pesos annually are exempt from tax payments. She attempted to explain that, since 2001, she has had a company—a four-story photography studio—registered with the Department of Commerce and Revenue. The official, nodding, glanced only at the first page of her company's registration title. He then asked to see her bank statements and confirmed their existence with a dull grunt—without even handling them.

The official then asked her with whom she lives, and she replied that she lives with her parents. He then continued, "Who lives at the address in Northbrook, Illinois?" She responded that I did. (While we both live in Mexico City, my parents live at the Northbrook address, and it remains my official U.S. residence for tax and legal purposes.) At no time did the official review any other documentation, including my formal invitation letter, which vouched for Elizabeth.

He then asked Elizabeth what type of car she owned. She replied, "A Chevy." After a few seconds, he handed back all her documents and said: "Sorry, *senorita*, but for now we are refusing you the visa."

When Elizabeth asked for an explanation, the official responded: "It's refused, and, if you want a reason, enter the [consulate's] web page and check Section 214(b) of the Law of Immigration."

Elizabeth replied that she did not agree with the decision and requested the official's name to refer to in further communications regarding the situation. He retorted curtly: "*I already told you*—if you want to know, look at the web page." She assured him that she would and again requested his name. With a rude imperial wave, he simply said, "Go away." Diplomacy, indeed: Hell hath no fury like a bureaucrat's belligerence.

The form letter he gave her states that a visa is refused when an applicant cannot "clearly show to the Consul that it is not their [*sic*] intention to stay in the United States for more time than is allowed for a temporary visit." I did not find this section on the website. The instruction brochure for visa applicants clearly stated that "The consul will make a decision as justly as possible, and [if you are refused] will tell you with as much courtesy as possible." The consular official is depicted in a sketch as a nice, petite, smiling woman behind bulletproof glass. Perhaps the diplomatic truth slipped though in the illustration.

Insulted, Elizabeth went to another window to seek a logical explanation and asked the visa chief, Scott Renner, to reveal the identity of the unnamed official who had attended her, since she wanted to file an official complaint. Mr. Renner responded that the name was registered in the consulate's computers under her case number. He gave Elizabeth a paper with his name and a fax number where she could send her complaint. She thanked him and left.

Surprised by such an incoherent refusal of her application, I assumed there must have been a misunderstanding between two people speaking their finest Spanglish. I wrote a letter to Mr. Renner recapping what had occurred and clarifying that Elizabeth wanted to make a mere one-week journey and that both of us made our livings in Mexico. I went to the embassy the following day and asked the receptionist how to present the letter to Mr. Renner in the visa section, since only foreign nationals with an appointment can enter. The receptionist suggested I consult the Marine guard or talk to the police stationed at the front entrance. I decided to take the police option and was waved through the first control to the private security guards at the visa-section door. I explained my purpose, and the first guard, Rodolfo Perez Avila, ushered me past a waist-high gate and instructed me to knock on the reinforced glass door. When I did, three gray-suited, black-bereted Mexican women in combat boots turned momentarily to look—and then immediately returned to their lively conversation. I knocked again, mouthing, "Can I speak with you a moment?" Again, a brief look in unison before returning to their chatting and giggling. You might assume that the U.S. embassy would hire a top-notch organization to handle security matters, but I was met by a combined operation of Mut and Jeff and the Keystone Cops.

I returned to Mr. Perez Avila and suggested that the guards did not seem in-

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clined to assist me. He stood momentarily perplexed before I coached him diplomatically into lifting his radio to call a supervisor. Eventually, another of his colleagues, Mr. Davila, came and said that he would inform Mr. Renner immediately. After 15 minutes, I suggested that Avila and Davila call again, and they slowly got on the horn—banging their hand radios to get them to work—and spoke to some invisible third party further inside. I was told that, while Mr. Renner was out of town, his colleague (also a visa chief) would meet me "*ahorita*" (a Mexican euphemism that means "just now" but can also mean up to a day—or never). After an additional ten minutes had passed, another guard, Mr. Baltazar, appeared and, speaking for the other two, informed me that "a program" was under way. I said, "That's great, I'm so glad"—but I would either need ten minutes to speak with someone to present my letter and documents, or they would have to spend hours answering questions from senators' and congressmen's offices. Mr. Baltazar asked me to repeat my concern, and I patiently tried to summarize the situation—while Mr. Baltazar avoided eye contact and began talking with his colleagues. After it became clear that *ahorita* meant *never*, I realized it was time to try the Marine guard.

I went back to the embassy entrance and asked the guard how to deliver the letter and documents. He asked what it concerned, and I explained, with some measure of frustration. He retorted: "Hey, I have nothing to do with this—*and I don't want anything to do with this.*" I suggested that I had been sent to him, and I was sure he could find a way. He resentfully called his superior.

After about 15 minutes, Mr. Peter Velasquez from Diplomatic Security came out to meet me. We introduced ourselves cordially, and I explained the situation. I clarified that, at this point, we were not as concerned about the refusal of the visa as about the improper and insulting way in which Elizabeth had been treated. What I wished was simply to deliver the letter and documents to a responsible party from the consular services. Mr. Velasquez stated: "I guarantee you that these documents will be delivered to them. I promise that." He asked me to put my name on the manila folder and wait while he consulted his superior for protocol. He came back after about ten minutes and told me, "We cannot accept these documents." I replied that there would be a lot more time spent answering questions from my senators and congressmen. I asked if that was the only recourse he could suggest, and he nodded. I faxed my letter to Mr. Renner, since no one would receive it in person.

My parents filed a formal protest with the offices of Rep. Mark Kirk, Sen. Richard Durbin, and Sen. Peter Fitzgerald. These elected officials' staffers immediately collected the facts and wrote cordial letters requesting a review of the decision, noting that Elizabeth had every reason to return to Mexico and had no intention whatsoever to remain in the United States longer than a week. My parents also faxed a protest letter expressing their outrage at the consulate's refusal to grant my girlfriend an entry permit to be their guest. An American woman at the consular section did telephone them—to defend the official's right to make an arbitrary decision without even reviewing documents. The interviewee needed to "make a strong impression of financial solvency during the interview, and *the average interview lasts only two minutes.*" (So far, I have received no reply from Mr. Renner or anyone else.)

One of the elected official's staffers commented, "We encounter this often with U.S. Consulates, and the results are almost always the same: We want to reach out . . . *and wring their necks.*" Taxpayers might want to ask why their tax dollars are financing consular services that impart a negative image of the United States and abuse foreign guests. At present, U.S. consular services function as a government within a government, like the NSA or the IRS. For the State Department to lambaste other nations for "undemocratic" practices or for violating "the rule of law" is the epitome of hypocrisy.

It is small wonder that so many Mexicans choose to risk their lives and what little savings they have accumulated to cross the deserts of the Southwest to enter the United States illegally. Besides the promise of better wages and work opportunities, many may have found that it is not worth even the 20-cent telephone call to inquire about a seasonal work permit when the rules are so ambiguous and are applied at an official's imperial whim. If the U.S. government truly seeks a solution to the problem of illegal immigration from Mexico, perhaps a more logical and just system would yield an increase in legal taxpaying labor—a benefit to both countries' economies—and foster more neighborly relations. The resentment created by the *status quo* benefits no one. More Mexicans could work or visit legally and temporarily and be allowed to return to their families—and legitimate visitors, such as Elizabeth, could be allowed to enter the United States.

After September 11, 2001, U.S. Consular Services has little reason to crow; recent reports indicate that over 150 terror suspects have received visas since September 11. The INS did not record local addresses for them, nor are their whereabouts known. Maybe it's better they kept my girlfriend out after all.

Russell Gordon is a journalist and photographer based in Mexico City.

LIBERAL ARTS

COWBOY, CHANGE YOUR WAYS

"President Bush says he is going to appoint a 'ride-herd' to monitor progress along the Middle East peace trail. You would be forgiven for not understanding what he meant. Its meaning most likely eluded the leaders from the Middle East who [*sic*] he was meeting.

"'[I could] see them scratching their heads,' the US president told assembled reporters on Air Force One as he flew out of the Red Sea resort of Aqaba on Wednesday.

"'I don't know if anybody understood the meaning, it's a little informal in diplomatic terms,' he added, chuckling. . . .

"Mr Bush may not have adopted quite the right metaphor, says Lee Clark Mitchell, professor of English and a Western culture expert at Princeton University.

"In Texas, a ride-herd is a cowboy on horseback who keeps the cattle in line by cracking the whip, whistling and lasso-ing the odd stray.

"'He probably didn't mean it but his metaphor is tinged with being slightly patronising. Translated literally, it means that he will want things to go in the direction he wants them to go.'"

—*from "Bush revels in cowboy speak" by Kathryn Westcott, BBC News Online (June 6)*

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Letter From Russia

by Dmitry Shlapentokh

The New Anti-Americanism

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The events of September 11, 2001, have profoundly changed Americans' vision of the world, especially on security matters. The government has even created a new Cabinet-level position to deal with the matter. While this concern is legitimate, it contains an irrational streak.

In airports, even nail clippers and metal combs can be confiscated. Leaving Dulles International Airport outside Washington, D.C., in October right after the attacks, I was surprised to see members of the National Guard standing at the ready with rifles practically pointing at the passengers. On the plane, it was announced that no one would be allowed to stand or go to the bathrooms for 30 minutes. Apparently, the worry was that a terrorist could take advantage of the plane's location above the capital and engage in a suicidal hijacking. No one elaborated on what the lot would be of the unlucky passenger who was unable to wait and dared to approach the restrooms. Presumably, some plainclothes agent would do what Vladimir Putin has promised to do to the Chechen terrorists: "bomb them even when they're in the toilet."

These actions reflect more than a fear of a terrorist attack. They are a manifestation of a deeper subconscious fear in Americans—the fear of instability and economic decline and foreign competition. In Europe, these subconscious fears have taken a different form. The uncontrolled globalization of capitalism and the end of the Cold War have led to changes in the way Europeans see the United States. These new images of America are interesting not only in themselves but because they inform us about the peculiar way in which both Eastern and Western Europeans reject America's predominance in the world in general and in Europe in particular.

For centuries, Europeans viewed America as the embodiment of individualism and, since World War II, as the country of crass materialism and sexual promiscuity. Americans were uninhibited, and this trait was related to the country's capitalist individualism. America was also a society of uprooted émigrés whose behavior was not restrained by layers of historical tradition. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, most Europeans viewed these traits, real or imaginary, as negative. In the post-World War II era, however, these images of the United States were favorably contrasted with the totalitarian images of the Soviet Union. This changed vision of the United States was an essential aspect of the country's allure for Eastern Europeans and Soviet citizens.

Recently, the image of the country has begun to change. Many Europeans are coming to see the United States as a country whose citizens are under strict control and whose sexual lives are minutely regulated. In fact, according to them, America has become an Orwellian society, a carbon copy of the vanquished Soviet Union. This image of the United States is rapidly spreading through post-Soviet Russia, as well as through both Eastern and Western Europe.

I first became aware of this during a recent visit to Russia. Some of my friends there, including those who had lived for a time in America, stated that they could not stay in America because of a lack of freedom. They sounded like those people of my father's and my generation who fled the Soviet Union almost a quarter of a century ago. Many of these people had proclaimed that what they most hated about Brezhnev's Soviet Union was not so much the standard of living (many of them had comfortable lives there) but the lack of freedom. Today, this century-long paradigm—"Free America" and "Unfree Russia"—has been recast. America is now seen as a place where people who are used to living in a free society cannot endure. At least this was the message of a Russian friend of mine. A painter, he was in the underground during Soviet rule. Under Gorbachev, however, he enjoyed a real popularity in the West. The reason was simple. During Gorbachev's reign, the West became fascinated with everything Russian, and underground art was in great demand. So my friend made a great deal of money. The problem was that he was inexperienced in financial matters (or unlucky), and he started to build a mansion in the Crimea. When the Soviet Union collapsed, his half-finished mansion was now in a foreign country, Ukraine.

Later, he came up with a new scheme that would make him rich overnight. An interest in previously banned books marked the beginning of the post-Soviet era. One such book was the collected works of Berdyayev, the émigré philosopher. Berdyayev emphasized the mysteriousness of the "Russian soul," which supposedly dreaded the materialistic cravings of the West. At the same time, Berdyayev believed this soul was "feminine and in search of a groom from the West." My friend bought several hundred copies of Berdyayev's book, in which this vision of the mysterious Russian soul was elaborated, expecting to resell them at a handsome profit. My friend's Berdyayev project did not work, as the fascination with forbidden fruit did not last long, and Berdyayev was of no great interest to the public anyway. He had to sell the books as scrap paper. He was later told that Berdyayev had been transformed into rolls of toilet paper.

Now, my friend earns his living as a decorator of fashionable restaurants. One of his major clients was the restaurant Rasputin, whose major attraction is 300 topless girls. On a recent trip to Moscow, I visited my friend there while he was decorating the walls, in Michelangelo fashion, with erotic frescos. Several men were cleaning the premises and moving the furnishings around. Most of them were in their late 40's and early 50's. All wore shabby clothes and had the look of beasts of burden whose only enjoyment in life is a little food and rest. Upon finishing their chores, they received their reward—a big jar of brew that they devoured with gusto. It turned out that all of them had Ph.D.'s in various fields. While they were not formally among the unemployed, the meager wages, if any, of $30 to $40 that they received for their scientific labors were insufficient to buy their daily bread. So, the work in Rasputin was necessary to their survival. The topless girls evoked little interest among them—not only because they were used to their presence but because their thoughts were on a more important matter: food.

My friend took a break from his labors, and we sat and chatted for a while over a glass of vodka and some salami. He had lived for a considerable time in America. "Dmitry," he said, "you have lived in the United States for more than 20 years. This is amazing—you should receive a medal for endurance. But it's not surprising that you have grayed considerably. I couldn't stay, at least not forever." When asked what the problem was, he paused for a moment to look at the dancing girls. His eyes held the gaze of a cat watching a

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succulent mouse cross his path. "You know, I was amazed at how the America of my dreams was so different from that of real life."

"What shook your belief in America?" I asked. "The competition for jobs?"

"Yes, but not only that. America is not a free society. All of that political correctness. If you even look at a girl you are accused of being sexist. Those idiots, the Americans, believe they live in a free country. Idiocy, absolute idiocy. They live in a prison, a concentration camp. They live in a Stalinist society."

When I told my friend that he might be exaggerating a bit, he replied, "Not at all. You remember what was most hated in the U.S.S.R.? I don't have to tell you that it was informers. Everybody hated them. It was the Soviet authorities that caused Russians to be informers. And what do you see in America? They inform absolutely voluntarily. Everybody spies on you, on your private life. Your neighbors, your schoolmates, even the children are taught to inform on their parents, if they have done something wrong."

He took a sip of his drink and broke off a piece of salami before continuing. "And there is no sex in the country. This business of sexual harassment was always perplexing and amusing to me. Watching this stuff, I sometimes wondered how Americans managed to procreate. I suppose they leave the country for a while, engage in sex somewhere outside the country, and bring their babies back to the U.S.A."

I told him that his image of the United States exactly fit Foucault's theory that the punishing, controlling aspects of the modern West have led to the desexualization of Western civilization. He responded that, while he had never heard of Foucault, he fully supported his view with one amendment: He did not think the theory could be applied to all of Europe. "We Russians are Europeans, too," he said proudly.

My friend's image of America is widespread throughout Europe, as I discovered while attending an academic conference there. The conference was quite different from most of those I have gone to in the United States. The gathering, though organized by NATO, had a joyful frivolity that is sadly missing from such affairs in America. After finishing a discussion on the security implications of the recent changes in Russia, our host served us an excellent dinner and some fine wines. At my table, one of the participants remarked that it was "good wine, but it's not quite doing the job. I've heard there are some good pubs about. Maybe we can find some real booze in one." Here, there was no disagreement. Both sides of the Atlantic were now unified, as in the good old days when "Atlantic civilization" had boldly faced the Eurasian/Russian/Soviet threat.

While we were talking, a girl from one of the Eastern European nations had joined our table. She had spent considerable time in the United States and declared that she could not live in a country where romance was dead. She said that all of the talk of sexual harassment had killed romance in America. I assured her that she was exaggerating. She replied that I was rather naive, and then she changed the topic somewhat. "How awful American men act. And American women should be blamed for it—definitely!" I asked for examples. "When I was in Washington," she said, "I was asked to dinner by an American man. We decided to dine in a good restaurant. And you know what happened after the meal? He asked me to share the cost!"

Before I could reply that, in America, this could only mean one of two things—that either the man was young and dumb or he did not find her attractive—the host of our party, a chap from Croatia, looked up from his plate, took a sip of his wine, and added, "We are definitely different from Americans. We are not—and will not be—politically correct." Everybody agreed that, for this reason, Eastern and Western Europeans had more in common with each other than with Americans.

They all agreed that Russia and Western Europe have the same approach to sexual matters and share a deep-seated dislike of America, viewing it as a totalitarian country. And whether these reasons are real or imaginary does not matter. It was not surprising, then, that, after I told them that many Russians believed that the United States is a sexually repressive country, quite a few delegates took delight in the fact. I added that Russians see this sexual prudery as a clear example of the general repressiveness in American culture. Here, many people at the table remarked that Russians seemed to have some solid ideas, at least when it came to their perception of America.

I paused to remind everyone about the remarks a presenter from Norway had made during his talk. His premise had been that Russian women were sexual predators who married Norwegian men for visas and then became a drain on the country's social services. He added that uninhibited sexuality reigned supreme all over most of the former "evil empire." Perhaps our next conference should be held there, I said with a grin. The idea met with hearty approval. In fact, one American officer at our table was all for arranging a conference somewhere in Russia or perhaps Ukraine, which was to be the subject of future NATO expansion. This would be an affirmation, he said, of the common traditions of Western and Eastern Europe and their essential difference from America. This officer—one of those Americans given to self-flagellation when discussing his own country—had spent 20 years or so in Europe and was horrified at the prospect of having to return to the United States after the end of his service. His dread seemed remarkably similar to that of the Soviet diplomats of Stalin's era who had shuddered at the thought of having to return to Moscow where they would be, to paraphrase the title of Foucault's book, "controlled and punished."

All of these anecdotes indicate a more serious problem, one that could well affect the configuration of future alliances. Europeans' vision of American sexual culture and their image of the United States as a totalitarian hell, an archetype of Foucault's circular prison, can sound ridiculous and amusing. Yet it would be a mistake to ignore the remarks, since they have surprising structural similarities from Moscow to Paris, from Zagreb to Berlin. This new anti-Americanism, which curiously combines the statements of 19th-century liberals such as Tocqueville with post-World War II radicals such as Foucault, indicates the mood of a considerable number of Europeans, including those who are part of NATO or wish to be. The views of these people could well have an impact on the configuration of NATO in the future, especially if America, because of profound geopolitical and technological changes, starts to lose its fascination with Europe as its geopolitical alter ego. Of course, we cannot predict the future, but it would be naive to assume that the love affair between America and Europe will continue in the same way.

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The author thanks Ron Johnson for editing the work.

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WAR

Palestinianization and the Iraq War

by Wayne Allensworth

As American troops seized the center of Baghdad on April 9, looting, guerrilla warfare, and chaos continued across Iraq. In 21 days, U.S. forces had driven to the capital of Saddam's Iraq, though arguably Washington had been making war on this long-suffering country for over a decade—a war of economic sanctions, diplomatic isolation, propaganda, occupation by proxy (in the Kurdish north), and repeated air strikes. Saddam's "war machine," the bogeyman of the war hawks, had been hollowed out long ago. The reception has been mixed, with some hailing U.S. and British troops as liberators (though freedom for some may simply mean freedom to loot), while others have either resisted or remained wary of the occupiers. So far, American media have struck a note of triumph and, apart from a few perceptive commentators, have failed to see the Palestinianization of the Arab world that has resulted from the Iraq conflict, something many foreign observers have noted since the early days of the war.

In the second week of the war, for instance, *Asia Times* commentator Pepe Escobar gauged the reaction of the Arab world to the American attack on Iraq. The unexpected resistance of many Iraqis had, Escobar wrote, "galvanized the sentiment of anger" among Arabs. Reporting from Jordan, Escobar noted that the "first thing" anyone (whether Jordanian, Egyptian, Lebanese, or Somali refugee) he encountered mentioned was his elation that the "invaders" (not "liberators") were encountering resistance. Along with the anger and elation was a growing sense of the weakness and vulnerability of the Arab states' leaders, many of whom had collaborated with or only meekly protested the war. And the images of American tanks on the streets of Baghdad could easily be juxtaposed with images of U.S.-made tanks "in the streets of Gaza." "We are all Palestinians now," one Bedouin taxi driver told Escobar.

The fact of Iraqi resistance, however futile, had turned humiliation into anger, rage into action: Across the Arab world, tens of thousands took to the streets demanding an end to the attack, unnerving such Arab leaders as Egypt's Hosni Mubarak, who warned that the Iraq war would generate a "hundred Bin Ladiens." Soon after, a tape, purportedly of Osama himself, surfaced, calling on Arabs to overthrow those regimes that had quietly supported the American war on Iraq. An article posted on *Muslimmedia.com* followed suit, urging Muslims to unite against the elites who had "colonized our lands and societies on the West's behalf." The article maintained that "Islamic movements offer the only road to the true liberation of the Moslem societies and—eventually—of non-Moslem victims of Western imperialism."

Meanwhile, reports of volunteers heading for Iraq, heeding an earlier call by Bin Laden (made in February before the war even began) to mount suicide attacks on the Anglo-American forces, showed up in media across the world. On April 8, *Agence France Presse*, reported that Egyptians, Jordanians, Saudis, and Syrians were among the irregulars fighting American troops in and around Baghdad. An officer with the 1st Marine Division reported that, a few days earlier, U.S. troops had fought a ten-hour battle with the irregulars southeast of Baghdad. "We were ambushed twice, and there were four suicide car bombings against tanks," the officer said. Another Marine officer characterized the attacks as "jihad": "They were given a rifle and told to become a martyr." Even "moderate" Muslim clerics called for holy war. One Egyptian observer told an AP correspondent, "Now we have many calls to jihad, and those calls aren't only coming from what we usually call radicals or extremists." Many Iraqi exiles were also hostile to the U.S.-led assault on their homeland: One Iraqi woman living in Iran "tearfully" told the AP, "We Iraqis in exile don't want Americans to come liberate our country. They are coming to occupy our land." Even Christian Arabs united with Muslims in their anger at the United States. A Jordanian Christian called President Bush a "terrorist," maintaining that "we" now "hate Americans more than we hate Saddam."

Though many American media observers did not yet get it, their foreign counterparts did: The United States had lost the information war before the first bomb fell. One Russian commentator noted that Al Jazeera had encroached on "CNN's information space" across the globe and was playing a major role in shaping the world's perception of what was happening in Iraq. Britain's *Independent* wrote that Al Jazeera was "pumping out" images of a "third World country trying vainly to fight back against a hyper power of infinite technological superiority." Compared to the version offered by the U.S. media and CentCom headquarters, there was "no doubt which version most of the world believes."

Media reports on comments by U.S. military personnel probably did not help the situation. One Arab commentator, writing in the London-based *Dar al-hayat*, claimed that the "worst comment" he had heard regarding Iraqi resistance was from CentCom's media center: The Iraqis, journalists were told, were still not receiving the American "message." (The coalition did, of course, recognize the importance of media in the war, which is why their air attacks targeted Iraqi TV.) The *Guardian*, which maintained that the Americans were "aggrieved" that the Iraqis had not been "more grateful," quoted one U.S. Marine, who had passed within a few miles of the 8,000-year-old ruins of Ur, the birthplace of Abraham, as saying that "I've been all the way through this desert from Basra to here and I ain't seen one shopping mall or fast food restaurant." "These people," he continued, "got nothing."

Even such relatively friendly sources as the London *Times* published articles interpreting American actions as arrogant and describing the U.S. leadership as shallow, immature, and ignorant. Anatole Kaletsky, who supported Tony Blair's decision to back the war as a means of ending Saddam's "reign of terror," did not, for instance, buy the White House's attempts to link Saddam to Bin Laden. Kaletsky wrote that an "irrational, self-indulgent rage" among the American populace was "encouraged" by American politicians as a means of achieving "national catharsis" after September 11. An-

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other *Times* commentator, in an analysis of Arab and Muslim reaction to the war, claimed that President Bush has "at least one credit" in the war against Iraq: By focusing on Saddam Hussein, the President has helped to "transform" the Iraqi strongman into an "heroic champion" of the Arab cause. Saddam might even rise to the status of a "mythological figure" in the eyes of the Arab world.

Judging from media reporting and commentary on the war from across the world, the military victory of the coalition was never in doubt. When it became apparent that the regime in Baghdad was crumbling, however, the Arab world was dismayed: The "Arab street" had wanted the Americans to pay a bloodier price for so great an Arab city. Some Arabs cursed those Iraqis who welcomed the Americans, but hatred of America is apparently stronger than ever: The AP reported that the scenes of U.S. troops in the heart of Baghdad had made many Arabs "even more determined to join a jihad . . . alongside the Iraqis." In Cairo, an AP correspondent noted that a recruitment center for would-be *mujahideen* began filling up shortly after the news broke that U.S. forces had reached the heart of Baghdad.

So Saddam has fallen. The other, unintended, consequences of the conflict, however, have not yet been acknowledged in Washington: Operation Iraqi Freedom has united the Arab world in a way that Saddam and others had failed to do; Iraq, as an observer for the *Guardian* maintained, has become a "yearned for symbol of resistance for the Arab world, superseding even Palestine, and may yet leave a lasting legacy"; "moderate" Arab regimes are probably shakier than ever, as the "Arab street" rages at what it sees as collaboration with the enemy; Osama bin Laden appears to be succeeding, courtesy of the war, in radicalizing the Muslim world, likely boosting his recruitment efforts for years to come; Islamic terrorism is now a greater threat to U.S. national security than it was before the war; and the United States and her British ally are, as one pundit put it, "losing the peace, and it is probably too late to save it." The occupying forces have an obligation to set up a provisional Iraqi government, but the longer U.S. troops remain in Iraq, the harder it will be to salvage anything positive from the chaos.

Wayne Allensworth is the author of The Russian Question.

SOCIETY

That's *Life*: The Changing Face of Board Games

by Steven Terenzio

On the first page of *The Death of the West*, Patrick Buchanan proclaims that "America has undergone a cultural and social revolution." He argues that opinions, beliefs, and values have, in the last generation, been altered by elites using TV, the arts, educational institutions, and various avenues of entertainment to transmit their ideas.

One of those areas of entertainment, though not mentioned by Buchanan, is the popular board game. Amid the cultural decay facing today's children, perhaps a wary—and weary—parent would not initially consider board games problematic. Indeed, game industry giant Hasbro Inc. (which owns, among others, both the Parker Brothers and Milton Bradley lines) has recently promoted "family game night" as an alternative to other, less wholesome diversions. And that has a nice ring. Many baby-boomer parents well remember the fun they had as children playing such games as *Risk*, *Careers*, *Clue*, and, of course, *Monopoly*. Many of the vintage board games of the 40's, 50's, and 60's, however, have been altered in recent years to be more "relevant" to current sensibilities. These changes sometimes affect not only the hip new design of the board and the box but the content and the rules of the games themselves.

Take *The Game of Life*. Introduced in 1960 to commemorate the centennial of Milton Bradley's initial foray into the board-game business, *Life* quickly became one of the company's most popular items, complete with a photograph endorsement by Art Linkletter on the box. But Milton Bradley was bought out by Hasbro in the early 1980's, and, in 1992, the game received a dramatic facelift to "include 'Life Tiles' which reward players for recycling their trash, learning CPR and saying 'no' to drugs."

The starkest example of the different approaches of the two versions of *Life* is found in their views on marriage and children. In the 1960 version, a player "stops by the church" to get married and receives from every other player a cash present of $500 each time a baby is added. The old game clearly envisioned a family full of children, even though the player's plastic car token has only four seats for the kids. The rules explicitly advise that, "if you have more than four children, just crowd them in as you do in real life." This sentence was removed from the revised game's rules, even though the new SUV-like tokens still have only four seats. (The new rules, however, remind the players to "buckle up.")

The value placed on children in the old *Life* is even greater when the player retires. For each child, a player receives $20,000. If a player happens to be childless, however, he is expected to fork over $50,000 to an orphanage. Clearly, children are viewed as an *asset*, which increases in value as a person reaches old age.

In the updated version, a player receives a Life Tile each time he adds a child, but the tiles are placed face down and not looked at until the end of the game. By this time, the player most likely draws no association between a child and the cash value of a Life Tile. Moreover, the tiles say nothing about children. Whatever money the player receives comes from a certain deed performed or some other happenstance. In fact, after being placed in the family vehicle, children are not heard from again, save for a few spaces where the player must *shell out* cash for each child's daycare, summer school, and college. At retirement time, the children are nowhere to be found—no doubt relying on a government pension to take care of Mom and Dad.

The original version also includes a space where a couple celebrates their wedding anniversary. That space was removed when the game was updated.

The original *Life* uses pink and blue pegs to represent people, and the current Hasbro CEOs apparently were under no pressure to change the color scheme. But the game was updated in a number of other ways with the modern, fashionably sensitive family in mind. The playing board now includes illustrations of people in harmony with various flora and fauna. This fits in nicely with the environmentalist spin on several of the spaces, such as "Adopt a pet," "Plant a tree," and "Support wildlife fund." Though many of the Life Tiles (such as "Build better mousetrap") are innocuous enough, among those with the highest cash values are such so-

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cially conscious initiatives as "Save endangered species," "Help the homeless," and "Solution to pollution." By comparison, the original version seems obsessed with the mere accumulation of wealth. This is not to say that the 1960 version has no philanthropic conscience to it; the space, however, simply reads "Give to your favorite charity," rather than presenting the player with a PBS-style agenda. (Needless to say, the $5,000 space that says "Catch a whale skin diving" was not retained.)

The nature of *Life* has always been that, on any spin, fortune can strike you for ill or for good, and this remains the case. In the original, however, there is a basic stability in the player's family, job, and earnings that is missing from the later version. There are four spaces in the current edition on which you might change careers—including a "midlife crisis." Seven other spaces can cause you to trade salaries with another player. In the 1960 version, this cannot happen, even if you are sent back spaces (a possibility not retained in the updated model). The original rules assure a player that he can always depend on his vocation: "Once a doctor, always a doctor." And, lest anyone question the stability of matrimony, the 1960 rules explicitly say that you cannot get married again, declaring that "There's a law against bigamy!"

The hard knocks of life are softened in the 1992 version. Gone are the "revenge" and "share the wealth" cards by which an opponent could take your money. No doubt owing to the inherent goodness of people, only an occasional anonymous Life Tile can be taken by an opponent (and only if the pile has dried up). The original game represented an understanding of man's fallen nature in spaces on which shiftless relatives and flimflamming friends can cost a player money.

This softening of the blows that life can bring is also seen in the revised game's approach to the stock market. It is possible to lose your stock but not to lose any money investing in the market. In the original, playing the market is a monetary gamble.

The sense of cradle-to-grave security is most apparent at the game's conclusion. What was originally called the "Day of Reckoning," when your ultimate fate could range from becoming a millionaire to winding up in the poor house, is now simply called "Retirement." Even if a player doesn't end up in "Millionaire Estates," he can rest easy at "Countryside Acres," presumably in a comfortable, assisted-living environment.

Ironically, in their attempt to update *The Game of Life*, the manufacturers have dated it. Too many of the changes reflect today's "correct" nostrums. These platitudes place the game squarely within a post-1970 era of Earth Day and small families. The game will no doubt need additional facelifts as the years go on, since more novel social innovations will put a strain on the company to keep it current. What's on the horizon: children *before* marriage? Cash awards for installing three-gallon toilet tanks? A space that reads "Enter into domestic partnership, collect presents!"?

By contrast, a look at the original *Life* reveals, for the most part, a game not tied to a narrow historical period. Save for one or two spaces that mention helicopters and a visitor from Mars, the 1960 version would make sense to anyone born after the introduction of the automobile.

Furthermore, the playability of the 1992 version has suffered, primarily because of the surprise Life Tiles that are only revealed at the very end. *Life*, after all, was not designed to be a mystery game.

Worst of all, the potential for adventure for a young player has, to a great extent, been removed from the new version. One space reads "Don't drink and drive." Sound advice, but hackneyed and preachy nonetheless. And what does the corresponding space in the original game say? "Weekend in Vegas, collect $50,000."

So what are parents to do if they did not hold on to their old games? Happily, not all of the baby-boomer board games have been altered. *Monopoly* is still being manufactured with its early design and rules, and it even ignores the ravages of inflation by keeping the same prices and values for the properties, houses, and hotels. And *Clue* still plays like it did in 1950. True, many of its fans have lamented the fact that the murder suspects and the rooms of the house have been redesigned. At least the rules and object of the game are the same, however, as are the weapons and crime scenes.

If you have a little time and patience, you can try to obtain the original versions of the games. Many websites sell a wide variety of used board games at relatively affordable prices. Surprisingly, many of the old games can still be found complete and in good, clean condition. I have found the quality and craftsmanship of a used 1960 *Life* to be superior to the brand new 1990's version. *Life* is noted for its *teetotem*, the numbered spinner that indicates how many spaces players should move. The spin was consistently smooth and true on the old game, while the new one often sticks without making a complete turn, forcing the player to spin again. It may be trite to say, but it is true: They really don't make them like they use to.

Steven Terenzio writes from Stanford, Connecticut.

Targeting Liberties

by Paul Blackman and Dave Kopel

Imagine *Time* had not named FBI whistleblower Colleen Rowley a "person of the year" but gave the award to the FBI bureaucrats who obstructed Crowley's investigation of Arab terrorists. That would be no more ridiculous than *Washingtonian*'s naming of Charles Moose as one of its "Washingtonians of the year." Moose is the Montgomery County police chief who oversaw the miserably incompetent hunt for the D.C.-area sniper. Moose proved far more effective at fighting civil liberties than at fighting terrorism.

Claiming credit for catching the snipers, Chief Moose has signed a large contract to write a book, presumably to defend his actions in the sniper investigation and, perhaps, to blame his miscues on the other groups involved in the multijurisdictional investigation. The contract, however, apparently runs afoul of the rules established by the Montgomery County Ethics Commission, which prohibit "using the prestige of office for personal gain."

He is also using the prestige of his office to start a consulting firm to offer, among other things, advice on crisis management and conflict resolution. Moose claimed he was planning to do consulting ever since he came to the county—with the county executives' permission—but he did not actually incorporate his firm until several weeks after the snipers were caught and the chief was lionized.

Moose has also held a teaching position since 2000, without bothering to get the county's official permission. And apparently, an annual salary of $160,619 isn't enough. He needs a bit extra for some Air National Guard work. In addition, he is receiving an advance on a book and plans to sell the rights to a movie. Ac-

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cording to the *Washington Post*, among the ethics provisions he may have violated are

> prohibitions against using a job title, uniform or the county insignia in a private enterprise; restrictions on outside contracts and employment; and rules forbidding employees to use county resources or county time for personal profit.

In theory, Chief Moose is also precluded from disclosing confidential information, which might prove difficult if he plans to explain how the multijurisdictional investigation was carried out. It is also unclear how the timing of his book and movie might affect the coming trials of the accused and, if they are convicted, their appeals, which could easily last through 2004. The book is set to be published around the same time that their trials are scheduled to begin.

The chief is also lobbying for the curtailment of gunowners' freedoms in the Free State. The laws he and the antigun lobby are promoting are presumably ones that they will claim would have made it easier to catch the snipers—laws that would have been irrelevant, since the suspected snipers' gun came from Washington State.

These laws would expand the ballistic "fingerprint" system, which has helped to solve no crimes in New York and Maryland, where it currently covers handguns, and which has been acknowledged even by California's antigun attorney general to be unfeasible. Another law would ban a long list of rifles and shotguns, including all Bushmaster semiautos (which the snipers used), as "assault weapons." If such a law had been in place and the killers had been caught bringing their Bushmaster into Maryland, they would have been charged with a misdemeanor.

The snipers were finally captured because they were foolish enough to keep calling the police hot line until someone finally listened to their own tip that there was a link between the D.C.-area killings and an unsolved murder in Montgomery, Alabama. Still, they were only apprehended because the media defied Chief Moose's blackout order and broadcast the license-plate number of the killers' blue sedan.

Before that, the focus had been on white trucks, white vans, and white men, producing massive roadblocks, huge traffic delays, and the sort of racial profiling not allowed in the search for ordinary criminals or even Arab terrorists.

The first days of lethal shootings saw two reports of suspicious vehicles: a blue sedan and a white box truck. Police focused on the truck seen in Montgomery County instead of the sedan seen in D.C. The police stopped and searched white trucks for a day, forcing innocent drivers and passengers to kneel at gunpoint, hands locked behind their heads, while the police conducted warrantless searches of their vehicles. Almost no objections were raised. The police expected truck drivers to be eager to cooperate, knowing they were suspected of heinous shootings—assuming they were listening to the right radio station.

Police targeted white trucks and white vans because those vehicles were spotted driving away from places where a gunshot had been heard. Common sense would indicate that most drivers who hear gunshots nearby will drive away as fast as possible, to avoid becoming secondary targets of mass murderers. But Moose viewed such behavior with suspicion when the vehicles were white. The October 3 witness's account of a dark Chevrolet Caprice leaving one of the crime scenes with its lights off was with-

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held from the media.

Chief Moose's press conferences repeatedly led to more shootings. When he announced that children were safe in schools, the killers shot a boy heading to school. When Moose said that geographic profiling might help to find the killer, the killers took their shooting spree to suburban Virginia.

Roadblocks became the standard response to each shooting, with special attention focused on white vans and trucks, as well as vehicles with white male drivers or passengers. This was not based on a shred of evidence but on the prejudices of government profilers.

It is questionable whether roadblocks staged as public-relations gimmicks are constitutional when they are imposed, for example, 80 miles away from the crime scene. (One roadblock was set up at the D.C.-Maryland border after a shooting near Richmond, Virginia.) Such p.r. stunts did nothing other than to impress people with the apparent seriousness of the show of force.

Even more wrongheaded was the less-publicized effort to find the shooter by test-firing guns belonging to law-abiding citizens. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (BATF) demanded that licensed gun dealers in suburban Maryland and Virginia give them lists of those who had purchased self-loading rifles, particularly the Colt AR-15, since the Colt is a popular .223-caliber rifle—the same size as that used by the snipers. Then BATF and local authorities contacted the gun owners and asked them to submit their rifles for ballistic testing. Most cooperated; the guns were taken and eventually returned.

Long before local authorities began harassing Colt owners, the authorities knew that the gun being used in the murders was a Bushmaster, so there was no reason to waste law-enforcement resources collecting and testing Colt rifles. Nor was there a legitimate reason to collect Kalashnikov rifles during the days following a phony tip that the killer used such a rifle. (The "witness" established his *bona fides* by claiming that the shooter was light of skin and van.)

The Brady Campaign and the BATF insist that the snipers' murder spree proves the need for a massive database of ballistic images of guns belonging to law-abiding citizens. How would such a system have helped to catch the snipers?

Carefully examining bullets at the various murder scenes, forensic scientists were able to determine that the bullets came from the same gun, and that the gun was a Bushmaster rifle. No database was needed to make this determination; rather, the firearms examiners conducted the same microscopic examinations used by forensic scientists to make determinations about ballistic images.

The BATF claims that it currently takes bullets from crime scenes and matches them to guns and bullets used in other crimes. Yet the ballistic image of a bullet used in a robbery-murder in Montgomery, Alabama, was never matched with the snipers' bullets until the killers repeatedly phoned the police to brag about the connection.

Now, Maryland authorities have announced that they are using the clearly irrelevant gun leads they gathered during the October scare—during which folks were happily informing police that their neighbors were armed—to determine whether they can find technical violations of the state's onerous gun laws (see *www.bloomfieldpress.com/links/linksmd.htm*).

How many additional murders took place because of the bigoted hunt for the phantom white-male mass killer? How many more murders would have been perpetrated if the media had obeyed Chief Moose's demand not to broadcast the license plates of the murderers' automobile? As commander of the investigation, Chief Moose oversaw the violation of the Second and Fourth Amendment rights of huge numbers of citizens. Those violations, in retrospect, look more like part of a demonstration of force for its own sake than of a serious investigation.

Criminologist Susan Paisner, in a November 24, 2002, op-ed in the *Washington Post*, detailed numerous other gross incompetencies of the investigation and concluded that

> In the end, if one of the suspects hadn't cracked the case wide open by bragging about the Montgomery, Ala., shootings, they both might still be out there instead of in jail awaiting trial. The truth is, the two were caught despite the chief's and the task force's efforts, not because of them.

Unfortunately, the *Washingtonian* award appears to be an accurate reflection of public sentiment toward Chief Moose. He was probably the least controversial choice the magazine made. Praise from the public and the media has been all but universal. The politicization of policing over the past few decades has made p.r. gimmickry the model for evaluating not just politicians but criminal investigations. And, apparently, a nation willing to sacrifice liberty for the pretense of security, demonstrated by the lack of public outcry over the U.S. Patriot Act and the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security in the wake of terrorist attacks, will also give up liberties for more ordinary slayings.

Paul Blackman and Dave Kopel coauthored No More Wacos: What's Wrong with Federal Law Enforcement and How to Fix It.

ECONOMICS

The Clinton Contraction

by Greg Kaza

William Jefferson Clinton is the first Democratic president of the postwar era to have presided over a decline in manufacturing jobs in the American Southeast. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, monthly manufacturing payroll employment increased ten percent in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia under Harry S. Truman, 14 percent under John F. Kennedy, 27 percent under Lyndon B. Johnson, and six percent under James E. Carter but declined four percent under President Clinton.

How severe is this manufacturing contraction? Economists disagree about the factors that caused the Great Depression, but the event taught them a great deal about how to measure contraction. Gottfried Haberler, in his 1937 book, *Prosperity and Depression* (Harvard University Press), identifies three times series—employment, production, and income—that can be analyzed to determine whether an economy or a specific private-industry sector is expanding or contracting. Today, economists use three measures of these time series: duration, depth, and diffusion. The period of contraction must be sufficiently long (*duration*), feature a substantial decline (*depth*), and affect a

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sufficient number of industries (*diffusion*). Duration is measured by calculating the difference between the cyclical peak and trough; depth, by the degree of decline; and diffusion, through the use of indices that compare the percentage of sectors increasing during designated intervals with those in decline.

The duration of the ongoing contraction in Southeast manufacturing employment is the longest since the monthly data series started in 1939—in other words, since the Great Depression. Southeast manufacturing employment peaked on Mr. Clinton's watch in January 1995 at 4,785,100 workers. U.S. manufacturing employment peaked more than three years later, in April 1998. There were 4,096,900 employed in Southeast manufacturing in November 2002, which means a net loss of 688,200 manufacturing jobs in the region. Measured from its January 1995 peak, the contraction lasted 95 *months*. Before the current recession, which started in March 2001, the average duration of declines in Southeast manufacturing employment was only 14.2 months. (These declines occurred from August 1948 to July 1949; September 1953 to July 1954; November 1956 to May 1958; September 1960 to February 1961; August 1969 to March 1971; December 1973 to March 1975; October 1979 to July 1980; September 1981 to January 1983; and June 1989 to April 1991).

After World War II, Southeast manufacturing employment grew during all ten U.S. expansions and declined in the recessions that followed. From April 1991 to January 1995, Southeast manufacturing jobs increased 5.5 percent, the second-smallest gain of the postwar era. By comparison, Southeast manufacturing employment expanded 48 percent under Kennedy and Johnson; 26 percent under Truman and Eisenhower; 15 percent under Nixon; 22 percent under Ford and Carter; and 15 percent under Reagan and Bush.

The depth of Clinton's contraction is the greatest of the postwar era. Through December 2002, Southeast manufacturing employment declined 14.7 percent from its peak. The old record (14.4 percent) was set between December 1973 and March 1975. Manufacturing employment fell 17 percent in the World War II demobilization (November 1943 to February 1946).

Those who downplay the significance of these declines argue that they are limited to the Southeast's textiles sector. Employment in textiles-producing nondurable goods—"Textile Mill Products" and "Apparel and Other Textile Products"—has fallen by more than 220,000 since 1995. The greatest declines in employment under President Clinton occurred in North Carolina (70,900); South Carolina (43,000); Tennessee (42,500); Alabama (35,400); and Mississippi (21,800). Yet the contraction has been more dispersed. Some components actually started to contract in 1994. Southeast manufacturing employment suffered seven lean years during this portion (1994-2001) of Mr. Clinton's tenure.

The contraction's diffusion is evident in Bill Clinton's home state of Arkansas, where employment in 80 percent of manufacturing components declined between the state's June 1995 peak and January 2001, when Clinton left office. These included durable goods such as lumber and wood, furniture and fixtures, primary metals, industrial machinery, electronic equipment, and instruments and miscellaneous manufacturing; and nondurable goods such as food and kindred products, textile mill products, apparel and other textile products, paper and allied products, printing and publishing, chemicals and allied products, petroleum and coal products, and leather and leather products. Employment grew in only three manufacturing components (fabricated metals, transportation equipment, and rubber and miscellaneous plastics) and was neutral in stone, clay, and glass.

A depression is a recession that is major in both scale and duration. Using this definition, which is widely accepted among economists, Southeast manufacturing employment is depressed. But what about production and income? Some economists argue that advances in technology mean fewer manufacturing jobs are required for growth in production. This argument has been a staple of Federal Reserve policy statements since the mid-1990's. Has this occurred in the Southeast? Only in the durable-goods manufacturing sector, where real Gross State Product (GSP) increased, but at a rate less than the U.S. average. (GSP is the state counterpart of U.S. Gross Domestic Product. Real data is adjusted for inflation.) Real nondurable-goods manufacturing GSP declined in 11 of 12 states (Georgia was the exception) and fell 15 percent for the region (1995-2000). However, Total Real Manufacturing GSP (durable and nondurable) actually declined in four states (Louisiana, Mississippi, Virginia, and West Virginia) in the period.

These long-term declines in employment and nondurable production are synonymous with depression. Southeast manufacturing personal income (1995-2000) grew at a lower average annual rate than at any time since the 1930's but Mississippi is the only state in which it declined. (Nondurable income in the Carolinas also fell.) The 2002 income data, which is scheduled to be released later in 2003, could provide more evidence. Manufacturing income fell in 10 of 12 states in 2001. The last time it fell in that many Southeast states was 1949. The last time manufacturing income fell for two consecutive years was during the Great Depression.

Greg Kaza is the executive director of the Little Rock-based Arkansas Policy Foundation, a nonpartisan think tank. A retired Michigan state legislator, he taught finance and investments in the graduate and MBA programs at Walsh College in Troy, Michigan.

LIBERAL ARTS

WHAT WOULD WYCLIFFE DO?

"The Virgin Mary is a 'pretty special sheila' who wraps her nipper in a bunny rug and tucks him up in a cattle feed trough, according to a new Australian version of the Bible.

"The Three Wise Men are 'eggheads from out east' who follow a star to find the baby Jesus and announce their arrival with: 'G'day, Your Majesty!' The Good Samaritan is a 'grubby old street sweeper' who patches up the victim of a highway robbery with his first aid kit, then drops him off at the nearest pub.

"*The Aussie Bible* . . . which will be published in August and is aimed at readers who believe the Bible is too high brow or simply boring. The project was devised by Kel Richards, a journalist and broadcaster. He admitted his motivation was unclear: 'I don't know if it was a brainwave, a seizure, or a bad oyster.'"

—*from "G'day Jesus, say the three wise eggheads" by Barbie Dutter, the London* Telegraph *(April 6)*

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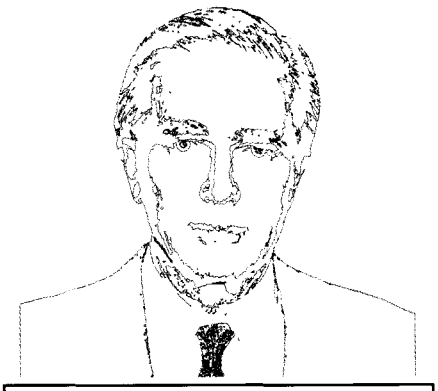
by George McCartney

God's in His Heaven



The Matrix Reloaded

Produced and distributed by Warner Brothers
Written and directed by Andy and Larry Wachowski

Bruce Almighty

Produced and distributed by Universal Pictures
Directed by Tom Shadyac
Screenplay by Steve Koren and Mark O'Keefe

The Matrix Reloaded, the second film of a projected trilogy, could hardly be more disappointing. Four years ago, *The Matrix* reinvented the science-fiction movie with an unparalleled blend of messianic allegory, visual artistry, and acrobatic stunts. The film's narrative told us nothing new, but—like art in general—it made us see the familiar as if for the first time.

Sibling directors Andy and Larry Wachowski had drawn from many sources to remind us that we all need to be saved from the quotidian haze that blinds us to what is central to our lives: the destiny of our freely choosing souls. The conceit the Wachowskis used to raise this issue has its provenance in Plato's myth of the cave and the disturbing news of the Gospels and, jarringly, a smattering of gnostic mumbo-jumbo.

To make this theme popularly accessible, *The Matrix* deployed a typical science-fiction convention. Machines have taken over human life and plugged everyone into an elaborate software program that simulates a reassuring, pacifying reality. Why do they not simply destroy mankind altogether? Human bodies serve them as a perfectly renewable energy source. So the metallic villains have us cocooned in glass capsules from which they can harvest our electrical impulses as we live placidly in a digitized virtual reality. Calderon de la Barca was right: *La Vida es Sueño*.

Needless to say, we humans needed awakening, and it was given to a young rebel named Neo (Keanu Reeves) to sound the alarm. Neo was the messiah who would shake us from our mechanical dream.

What riveted audiences was not the premise alone but its unique presentation. Nearly every frame of the film has a painterly composition. In an early scene, Neo stands on a rain-swept city street before an arched overpass. On his side, the avenue is in deep night shadow, but, through the archway, a streetlight shines, making the rainwater that cascades from above shimmer incandescently. You did not have to pick up on the scene's baptismal imagery to appreciate its luminous beauty. In other scenes, power relations are cued by the placement of characters in the frame. When programmed policemen come to capture Trinity (Carrie-Anne Moss), a young woman resisting the Matrix, she stands facing us in the extreme foreground, her hands laced behind her head in seeming compliance with the cops' command. As the officers approach her from behind, we see them in distorted perspective through the giant triangles formed by her crooked arms. The men in blue look like six-inch-tall action figures. We know who is in charge well before Trinity unleashes her high-kicking martial arts on her would-be captors.

Then there are the much-touted special effects. They are almost always subordinated to the film's larger design, which is unusual in a film of this genre. My favorite was Neo's final showdown with his nemesis, a nasty piece of software code capable of assuming human form (Agent Smith, played by Hugo Weaving with a weird stony-faced intensity). Smith shoots Neo dead only to see him revive after Trinity plants a well-timed kiss on his bleeding lips. Risen under the power of love, Neo sees through Smith to the programming that constructs him. The agent is nothing but a flow of vertical computer code, all zeros and ones. It turns out that Thomas Aquinas was right: Evil is, after all, a lack of presence. Rushing Smith, Neo dives into his simulated body and explodes it from within. He then steps forth in his own fierce glory. Hell has been thoroughly harrowed.

There was an infectious undergraduate headiness about all this. The Wachovskis seemed to have created a video-game version of the human search for redemption. I do not say this disparagingly. While I could have done with far less of the film's martial arts and high-tech violence, the production seemed to exhibit a healthy metaphysical giddiness. However naively undertaken, speculation on the nature of ultimate truth is one of our more civilizing pursuits. In fact, it was once thought to be the primary purpose of attending a good university. Of course, this faded in the 20th century, when higher education was urged on the young not as the path to enlightenment but the yellow brick road to wealth. Speaking of which, *The Matrix Reloaded* is an object lesson.

The disappointing difference between the first and second installments can be told in financial numbers. *The Matrix* was made on a not-inconsiderable but, by today's elephantine standards, not-extravagant budget of $63 million. When the film grossed nearly $600 million within six months of its release, producer Joel Silver and his investors decided to put $127 million into *The Matrix Reloaded*. The original film was released with minimal publicity and without toy-manufacturing tie-ins. The second has been hyped relentlessly for the past two years, and the tie-ins are flooding the market as I write. With *The Matrix Reloaded*, however, the financial inverse proportion of filmmaking exerts itself. The bigger the budget, the worse the film. The more money at stake, the more tampering by the producers and their investors. They want return on investment, and the iron law of big-budget productions is that special effects, regardless of their relevance to theme or plot, fill the theaters. That is what we get in *Reloaded*. It is loaded to the hatches with gravity-defying acrobatic fights, car

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and motorbike chases, and explosions galore. Watching this fiery farrago, I was reminded of the priceless skit John Candy and Joe Flaherty used to perform on *Second City TV*. As two yokels giving their weekly *Home Farm Film Review*, they had but two criteria to assess a film's success: how many and how big were its explosions. When a movie rose to their standards, they would hoot their formulaic accolade in unison: "Whooey! They really blowed 'em up big in that one!" Were the *Home Farm* reviewers still in business, *Reloaded* would detonate their fancy to nuclear proportions.

I have no way of knowing what decisions and compromises lie behind this film, but I cannot believe the Wachowskis are happy with the results—not artistically, anyway. I am sure the brothers stand to make truckloads of money from it. I hope they do; there is really no excuse for selling out unless you are indecently rewarded.

Reloaded has been shorn of all the filmic ingenuity that made *The Matrix* so startling. While the first film broke from the matrix of Hollywood conventions, the second reloads them. Only the most perfunctory attention is paid to the film's compositions and lighting. The screen has become a relatively still canvas on which the computer-graphics wizards have digitized a brain-freezing blizzard of stunts. The one that best expresses the film's failure of imagination is the multiplication of Agent Smith. In *The Matrix*, Weaving somehow managed to make the character—or, more accurately, the program—robotically soulless while simultaneously conveying its sneering contempt for the human race. He was one of the movie's best features—at once frightening and funny. So what happens to Smith in *Reloaded*? He is multiplied hundreds of times over, so he can fight Neo *en masse*, piling on our hero, who then bowls the duplicates over as if they were so many ninepins. The Smith duplicates are unwittingly explained elsewhere in the narrative. Learning that the machines are unleashing a force of sentinels—one for every man, woman and child—a character sententiously observes, "It sounds like the thinking of a machine to me." *Reloaded* itself thinks as a machine. Worse, it runs on suboctane imagination. I could not help feeling depressed as I watched the whole contraption sputter and explode through its interminable 138 minutes.

Amidst the stunts and fireballs, we get bits of disconnected plot delivered in a carelessly scrambled montage. It seems the evil machines are boring their way through the earth to the underground city of Zion, the last bastion of humanity. To stop this calamity, Neo returns to the oracle we met in the first film, the marvelously droll Gloria Foster, who gives this film one of its few moments of genuine energy. (Unfortunately, Foster died shortly after her performance, so she will not be able to leaven what may prove an even duller conclusion to the trilogy.) She tells Neo he must go to Merovingian to find the Keymaker who will take him to the Architect who will . . . But why go on? At this point, the script is filled with the kind of thumping banalities that resonate so richly throughout the *Star Trek* series: "To be looking for the Keymaker is not an end but a means"; "We are victims of causality"; "You don't really know someone until you fight them [*sic*]." My favorite is Morpheus' reply to an adversary who reminds him that not everyone believes as he does. "My beliefs," he stoutly asserts, "don't require them to." Now there's tolerance worthy of Mr. Spock.

The Matrix Reloaded includes a nearly nude love scene between Neo and Trinity, a nice touch in a film sponsoring action figures for children. I suppose that—this being a machine-made production—it would have unduly upset the gears of commerce not to include a shot of Keanu bare-assed.

Bruce Almighty is another film with theology on its mind, although it plays its heavenly scale in an entirely different key. Since it stars my least favorite manic comedian, Jim Carrey, I went to see it with bargain-basement expectations. To my surprise, I found the film both amusing and, at times, thematically deft.

Although the narrative often turns sappy, *Bruce* is anchored by yet another magisterial performance by the incomparable Morgan Freeman. He plays the Almighty in the only way humanly possible. Wryly bemused with his own authority, this film deity radiates a generous but demanding goodness. Freeman's performance and the script's surprisingly sound moral theology will undoubtedly make this the unlikeliest film of the year.

Carrey plays Bruce Nolan, a terminally ambitious Buffalo, New York, television journalist. He is approaching 40 and still has not achieved his dream of anchor-manhood. Relegated to doing remote feeds, he finally has an on-air meltdown that gets him fired. He goes home to his live-in girlfriend, aptly named Grace (Jennifer Aniston), who consolingly reminds him that everything happens for a purpose. This is too much. Nolan brays to the heavens, "Come on and smite me, Almighty Smiter!" In response, God shows up in a white suit to hand over His job. "I'm taking a vacation," He casually informs the incredulous Nolan. (That's smiting indeed.)

What does Nolan do with his powers? Suffice it to say, some of his antics are irresistibly hilarious.

I cannot think of another American film that makes the case that answering every prayer affirmatively might be a thoroughly bad idea. This one does so in spades. Petitioned endlessly for blessings, Nolan thoughtlessly says "yes" to them all, with consequences that could hardly be more dire. Finally, God asks him what he thinks he should be doing with his powers. Nolan responds with programmed earnestness, "Feed the hungry and bring peace to mankind. How's that?" Freeman smiles indulgently. "Great, if you want to be Miss America."

Choosing between what he thinks he wants and what he should want is the film's difficult moral issue, and, despite all the schmaltz, scriptwriters Steve Koren and Mark O'Keefe manage to challenge their audience—albeit briefly—to face up to the decision. c

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by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Two Deserts

Nineteen ninety-one was Operation Desert Storm. In 2003, it is Operation Shock and Awe—or was it Awe and Terror, or Shlock and Glock? We make progress backward, as befits the new millennium. Twelve years ago, the Pentagon at least managed to get the desert into it. The Mesopotamian Desert, as the troops have discovered on two occasions now, holds awe and terror aplenty (dust storms, heat, drought, marauding A-rabs). The desert as you see it in newspaper photographs and on television appears flatter than West Texas on a gray day, with here and there a palm tree growing from a crack in the crazed and baking flats and (sometimes) on the horizon sere sharp mountains like those back home in the state of Utah (another theocracy, formerly polygamous). All deserts are good deserts, but this Iraqi specimen looks to be really not my type, certainly not my ideal. The U.S. military seems to agree; anyway, it is more than willing to desolate and flatten it still further, while adding a few bomb craters for the sake of topographic diversity. Our culture does not respect desert, which it treats with either indifference or contempt (for which it unconsciously pays a penalty). If Iraq were not largely a desert "waste," this war might not be happening at all.

We left Laramie two days after the hostilities had commenced and less than a week after a spring storm dropped three feet of wet snow on eastern Wyoming, headed south across Colorado to Interstate 80 at the Wolcott node, west from Wolcott into eastern Utah to the Cisco exit, and from Cisco down the canyon of the Colorado River through Castle Valley to Moab, formerly a shabby old uranium town dug solidly into the slickrock desert at the foot of the La Sal Mountains before tourists and mountain bikers from Salt Lake City and Grand Junction rescued it from a handful of long-retired miners, gasping out their lives through cancerous lungs. All deserts everywhere in the world, from the Kalahari to the Great American Desert, are marked for destruction. The Colorado Plateau, at least, has its defenders. And it really *is* my kind of desert.

For 15 years, a camping trip in the slickrock country of southeastern Utah during the last week of March had been an annual tradition. Tradition ought to die hard, and this one would not rest easy. Also, my bride of seven weeks had yet to discover the vibrant splendors and tender beauties of this vast and still largely intact country; the war and the snowstorm were added incentives. I cashed in a gift certificate from REI, given us as a wedding present back in February, and bought Maureen a three-season sleeping bag and myself the expensive multipurpose Leatherman tool I'd coveted for a year. "That should keep you plenty warm," I told her, "but if not, you can always crawl in with me. It's one of the privileges of marriage. You know?"

A real journalist—to say nothing of a patriotic American—would have brought a shortwave radio and a battery-operated TV set along with the camp gear, to stay up on the war news. So far, however, Operation Shock and Awe, however great as a propaganda triumph, didn't amount to much as a war—no Rough Rider charges, no Hamburger Hills, no enemy—and we needed the space for three cases of 3.2 Utah beer. As Andrew Lytle remarked upon giving up radio, television, and the newspapers, if something important enough happened, we'd hear a rumor, eventually. Real news never dies, it just becomes history: Time enough to catch up later. Until then, we'd relax and contemplate what Eliot called the permanent things. The desert, for example. *This* desert. *Our* desert.

The desert, of course, is *not* permanent; indeed, there is nothing permanent about it. It just seems that way to us humans, incapable of perceiving the erosion and rearrangement over a handful of years of trillions of grains and granules of dust and rock that, significant as they are in the natural world, remain invisible to our dim-sighted eyes signaling our fatally time-cramped brains. So far as I could tell, Island in the Sky—a 6,000-foot-high redrock plateau tapering to a point above the confluence of the Green and Colorado Rivers—was unchanged in the ten or twelve years since I visited it last, except for a number of unwanted human additions: the paved road that had been washboard and a few new ones leading to "scenic overlooks"; a tollbooth at the boundary of Canyonlands National Park; an emptiness beside a sandstone outcrop where I remembered the brush corral, blackening under the desert sun, built decades ago by some evicted rancher, half-nomadic Indian, or roaming outlaw. I pointed out for Maureen the red dirt track wavering across the green meadow toward the rimrock 2,000 feet above the Green River, where, 20 years before, we had built a stone oven to conceal the campfire from the prying eyes of any park ranger who happened to be lurking in the vicinity and eaten supper by the light of a full moon, reflected out of the shadows from a bend in the river, far below. (I was impressed enough by the setting that I used it, the year after, for the conclusion of a novel where the hero and his girl, on the lam from civilization as personified by a Mormon sheriff, conceive a child in their sleeping bag.) Memory can widen the time gap, or narrow it. This morning, it seemed to be doing both, simultaneously. "I've never seen country like this before," Maureen said as we stood together at the precipice, looking down the talus slide to the wide bench a thousand feet below and gazing on across the river to the Henry Mountains, 50 miles to the southwest and gleaming dully under an opaque spring sky. "I never knew it even existed."

"Sometimes I think it doesn't," I told her. "Except in memory and in books."

From the tip of Island in the Sky, looking around Junction Butte standing out a few hundred yards in proximate detachment, I indicated the Six-shooter Peaks, North and South, hard to discern by the inexperienced eye at the southern edge of the tortured slickrock desert stretching 25 miles to the foot of the Abajo Mountains.

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"South Six-shooter's where we start up Lavender Canyon," I said. "It's 130 miles around, going by way of Moab—the *only* way."

We stopped in town to buy beer at the City Market and load it in the bed of the truck where the radio and TV should have gone. Much healthier to sit around drinking 3.2 beer than tuning in to George Bush's 3.2 war.

"I'd like to look into the shops when we come through here on our way home next week," Maureen suggested.

"To the best of my memory, there isn't a Nieman Marcus in Moab," I explained. "Though I wouldn't be surprised, one of these days."

Ignoring state law, I drank a couple of near beers on the road south. (You get more of a buzz from the sugar in a can of Pepsi, which, though it contains satanic caffeine, is kosher for Mormons on account of the church owning a large chunk of the company.) Since I visited the area last, the Dugout Ranch, in the Redd family since the 19th century, had been bought by the Nature Conservancy under a contract permitting Charley Redd's ex-wife to live on the property and operate it as a working ranch for her lifetime. We passed the Dugout, set back from the road beyond a green meadow tinged with purple vetch, and drove on a few miles to the turnoff onto the dirt trail leading back under South Six-shooter, a slickrock chimney rising above the desert, to the mouth of Lavender Canyon. "I've done this so often I could drive it with my eyes shut," I promised Maureen.

The road went through a gate and followed above the creek, past a stand of budding cottonwood trees that looked familiar. "We used to leave the truck and trailer there, under those trees, and begin the ride in from here," I mentioned. "We sounded like a tinker's wagon, all the pots and pans banging together in the horse packs."

"You're always bringing up the past," my wife mentioned. "You do it all the time."

"I know it," I said. "It's what I do for a living. But that was all a long, long time ago, now."

I eased the truck off a rock ledge and into the dry wash, where the deep sand drew the tires down. I climbed out to lock the front driveshaft in, and we continued on in the wash, six or eight feet below the greening grass and the budding prickly pear stretching to the red cliff walls converging ahead on either side of the meander. "We used to tie up for lunch under those cottonwoods ahead," I started to say, but changed my mind. The grove, though familiar looking, seemed changed, but not in a way I could explain, the trees appearing smaller in stature and bulk after ten years.

The two-track climbed out of the wash and entered dense thickets of salt cedar on the approach to the stony gap where the canyon pinched together. I hadn't remembered the salt cedar, but the stuff (imported from Asia a century ago) grows like topsy. Beyond the gap, the canyon widened out again, and I looked to the right for the trail going into the box canyon and the Fremont Indian ruin set back in a narrow cave in the cliff face, 50 feet above the canyon floor. Only, there was no road.

"This isn't Lavender; this is Davis Canyon," I thought aloud. "I didn't think we'd come any thirteen miles getting here. I should have turned up the second canyon we came to, instead of the first."

"This is fine," Maureen said. "Davis is a beautiful canyon. I think we should make our camp right here and enjoy something new."

"It *is* a beautiful canyon," I told her. "Also, it's your canyon."

"I know it," she agreed.

We found a clean, sandy place beyond a screen of juniper trees a few hundred feet from Davis Creek, and I drove the truck up as close as I could get it, steering carefully between the pancake pear with its inch-and-a-half long spines to avoid a flat tire. I dug a fire pit and surrounded it with rocks, and together we raised the tent on the smooth sand upwind of the fire. Finally, we brought up the food boxes, the collapsible chairs, the book bag, and one of the cases of 3.2 beer. "F--k the war," I said. "It's springtime in the desert. I'm going to build a big fire and mix a couple of martinis, and afterward we're going to eat our supper and sit by the fire looking at the stars and listening to the tree frogs down along the creek. And tomorrow we're going to make sheepherder coffee at breakfast and take a long hike in the side canyon. In the afternoon, we'll sit in the warm sun, while I read Burke and drink beer. It would be good to have the horses along, though."

"We don't need horses, this trip," Maureen told me. "You're living in the past, again."

"You're right," I said. "And Faulkner was wrong. The present, not the past, is what we have. Anyway, it is sometimes."

The sun dropped behind the canyon wall, and the blue sky overhead purpled, as the air thinned toward the evening chill. Inside the tent, Maureen rolled out the sleeping bags and arranged her boudoir, while I took a hike up the wash in search of firewood. Dessicated juniper limbs, split away from thousand-year-old trees four and five decades ago, lay partly buried in hills of red dust supporting the trees. I gathered a bundle under each arm and returned with the load to camp. Then I went back for another load. With a pile of good firewood and another of kindling stacked to hand, I laid a fire in the pit and lit it. The dry wood sent up a heavy smoke, which evaporated as soon as the fire burst into orange flame, but the pungent scent of juniper intensified as the flames caught and waved higher. Maureen came from the tent, wearing a sweater under her windbreaker and carrying the bookbag. I mixed a couple of vodka martinis, and we sat by the fire to drink them, holding our books open in our laps. "Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom," I read in the "Speech on Conciliation With America"; "and a great empire and little minds go ill together." ("Mr. Burke, meet President Bush, successor to the office of George Washington and John Adams." "I'm pleased to make your acquaintance, Mr. President. I perceive I ought to have supported Lord North, His Royal Majesty, and the *British* Empire, instead.")

"See that, honey?"

"What are they?"

"Bats."

"*Ooooh!* Bats have rabies, don't they?"

"Some of them do. The whole world's rabid, except for you and me."

"It's just as well we got married, then."

"Yes," I said. "I think it is." c

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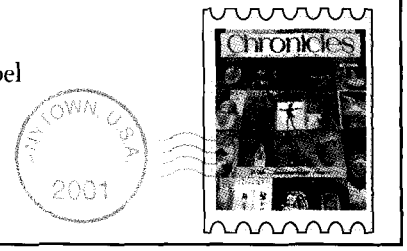

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by Paul Gottfried

The Continuing Revolution

In his critical work about the *bicentenaire* of the French Revolution, *Le Grand Déclassement*, French historian Pierre Chaunu explores the first stages of the unraveling of the glorification of France as a revolutionary nation conceived in 1789. By the time Chaunu's book was published in 1989, however, the official celebrations had been both scaled back and focused on the least divisive aspects of the early Revolution: the establishment of legal equality and the abolition of certain feudal practices. Historian François Furet, like Chaunu, has described as well as contributed to this process of reassessment. According to Furet, what made the French Revolution different from moderate liberal changes then taking place in Anglo-American societies were its least desirable aspects, most particularly mass murder.

As far back as 1790, Edmund Burke, in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, showed presciently that what the French revolutionaries were offering was not merely a timely reform of French monarchical institutions but an "armed doctrine," fully reflected in the "Declaration of the Rights of Men and of Citizens," passed by the French Assembly in August 1789. The proponents of this document were legislating not only for their own nation but for the entire human race. Presumably, reasoned Burke, those who spoke for mankind might also feel morally driven to liberate other peoples from their unnatural ways of life. What some French still call contemptuously "*droit de l'hommisme*" ("human-rights pieties") are not idle speculation but, unlike the originally modest American Constitution, a blueprint for world reform. And this blueprint, which we identify today with both the Jacobins and their American neoconservative caricatures, goes back to the very first month of the French Revolution.

A moderate social democrat (and certainly not a man of the right), Furet has revived the early 20th-century scholarship of the anti-Masonic Catholic Augustin Cochin to stress the role of Masonic networks in driving the Revolution forward. Indeed, much of the research on the intellectual background of the Revolution came out of the right, just as Furet's treatment of the centralizing tendencies of the Revolution draws consciously on the contextualization of that event by the liberal aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville. In the 1850's, Tocqueville pointed out the connection between the state-building of the Bourbon monarchs and the even more frenetic centralizing efforts of the Jacobins and showed that the Revolution carried out what the monarchy it rejected had begun to do politically. What made the revolutionary government particularly obsessive in its destruction of medieval provincial identities, however, was its devotion to a Masonic transformational project. Its leaders were consciously trying to change human nature as well as the established system of Christian and pre-Christian beliefs. And they proceeded to do so by engaging in, among other practices, mass killing.

Too much is now known about this violence—thanks to such scholars as Reynald Sécher—to allow the French Revolution to remain an object of reverence. In the 80's, Sécher, a student of Chaunu, brought out a series of books detailing the Nazi- or Soviet-like massacres of real or suspected antirevolutionaries in the Vendée and in Brittany. In January 1984, socialist journalist Max Gallo attacked Sécher in *Le Monde* for daring to equate isolated revolutionary excesses with "genocide." But Gallo's attempt to preserve the Revolution as a leftist icon, however, was not notably successful. With massacres in the 1790's reaching well over 100,000 and including the drowning of women and children, the Revolution looked too much like a 20th-century totalitarian project to allow it to be celebrated as a dawn of democratic freedoms.

Nor did it help matters much that, since the formation of the French Communist Party (following the Russian Revolution), French communists have run around extolling the Jacobins as their spiritual ancestors. Since the 1920's, prominent historians of the Revolution who have adulated the Jacobin dictatorship—Albert Mathiez, Georges Soboul, and Georges Lefebvre—have been either communists or communist fellow travelers and have underscored the inevitability of this choice for those who want to continue the revolutionary tradition. But events have overwhelmed those who enjoy such postures. As Chaunu pointed out in the 1980's, Frenchmen had to make two related decisions: whether to stand with Stalin or with his victims, a choice dramatized by the introduction into France of the works of Solzhenitsyn; and whether to side with the French revolutionary armies or with the peasant families whom the revolutionaries recklessly slaughtered. The French left insisted on throwing into the same *marmite* their Jacobin and Marxist-Leninist loyalties. They turned out to be right: Both loyalties instantiated the relation between radical human reconstruction and wholesale slaughter. And, in the end, it became necessary to affirm or reject both of these bloody experiments aimed at abolishing the past.

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[I]t is because the Serbians have been warlike that we have found it possible to be peaceful. If they are fierce it is because no courage short of sheer fanaticism could have kept the frontiers of Christendom against such locust-clouds of foes, while we were electing our first parliaments and building our first cathedrals. While all that we call the world was being made they were the wall of the world . . .

—G.K. Chesterton

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